

**Abilene Christian University
Student-Athlete Handbook
2020-21**



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Statement from the President

Congratulations on being chosen as one of our fine student-athletes to represent Abilene Christian University in NCAA Division I athletics!

For 113 years, talented young people have distinguished themselves in the classroom as well as in athletics competition around the globe for the Wildcats, and we trust you will continue that tradition.

The ACU community has high expectations for you, but also will be your biggest fans. We know you will make us proud with your diligence, teamwork and accomplishments.

We realize you make sacrifices of time and energy that your classmates may not understand nor appreciate. However, we take academics seriously at ACU and expect you to do the same as you work to be a strong student, as well as a competitive student-athlete. We also want you to remember the University's promise to be a vibrant, innovative, Christ-centered community that engages you in authentic spiritual and intellectual growth, equipping you to make a real difference in the world.

Wear the Purple and White proudly. Best wishes in your upcoming season and Go Wildcats!

Phil Schubert, Ed.D.
President



Mission of Abilene Christian University

Mission

The mission of Abilene Christian University is to educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world.

Mission, Vision & Guiding Principles of ACU Athletics

Mission

To honor Christ through excellence in Academics and Athletics

Vision

To win at the highest level by providing the most Christ-centered student-athlete experience in collegiate athletics

Guiding Principles

We have selected five Guiding Principles to guide and govern our actions at all times. They define what we believe and how we operate. We will recruit, hire, train, and manage according to these Guiding Principles:

- Faith
"Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see."
Hebrews 11:1
- Passion
"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart as working for the Lord and not for men."
Col 3:23
- Excellence
"If anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think on such things."
Phil 4:9
- Integrity
"For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of men."
2 Cor. 8:21
- Love
"My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you."
John 15:12

Slogan

Excellence for Christ (#ACUE4C)

Expectations of ACU Student-Athletes

At Abilene Christian University, we have seven (7) fundamental expectations for all our student-athletes:

Spiritual Growth

We expect our student-athletes to take full advantage of the opportunities at ACU to better themselves in every way from growing spiritually to discovering God's calling in their lives.

Character

We expect all student-athletes to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on the university and ACU Athletics.

Compliance

We expect our student-athletes to be in full compliance with all university, department, Southland Conference, and NCAA compliance regulations.

Academics

We expect our student-athletes to pledge their best efforts in their pursuit of knowledge and in earning their degree.

Competition

We expect our student-athletes to prepare diligently and compete aggressively in order to position themselves and their teammates to compete for championships.

Community Outreach

We expect our student-athletes to demonstrate their Christian faith by developing meaningful relationships and serving both the ACU and surrounding communities.

Personal Growth

We expect our student-athletes to develop skills and habits necessary to become leaders in their homes and places of work, and productive members of their communities.

Campus Resource Directory

Below is a short list of the many resources available to students. Please visit with your academic coordinator, coach or other staff member if you need help.

Resource	Ext.	Email
ACU Police	2911 or 2305	acupolice@acu.edu
Academic Advising	6770	advising@acu.edu
Academic Development Center	6400	adc@acu.edu
Campus Store	2524	campusstore@acu.edu
Career Center	2473	careers@acu.edu
Chapel	2867	chapel@acu.edu
Counseling Center	2626	counseling@acu.edu
Housing	2066	reslife@acu.edu
Library	2348	ask@acu.libanswers.com
Medical Clinic	2625	medical@acu.edu
Office of Multicultural Affairs	6822	abn18a@acu.edu
Registrar	2300	registrar@acu.edu
Speaking Center	6839	speakingcenter@acu.edu
Student Opportunities, Advocacy, & Resources [SOAR]	2036	soar@acu.edu
Team 55: Tech Help Desk	5555	team55@acu.edu
Title IX	6802	sherita.nickerson@acu.edu
University Access Programs	2667	
• Alpha Scholars	2699	eab16b@acu.edu
• Excel Tutoring	2517	nls12a@acu.edu
• Supplemental Instruction [SI]	2919	tina.fleet@acu.edu
University Testing Center	2548	acutesting@acu.edu
Wildcat Central Student Services	2300	wildcatcentral@acu.edu
Writing Center	4833	writingcenter@acu.edu

Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC)

ACU's SAAC acts as a liaison to the athletics administration at ACU, ensuring student-athletes have a voice in all issues impacting their overall experience and welfare. It also serves as a leadership group recruiting fellow student-athletes to serve the campus and community through a variety of service programs.

Member Qualifications

- You must be an active student-athlete at ACU to participate in SAAC.
- Each team is encouraged to have two representatives (one upperclassman and one lower classman) to participate in SAAC.
- More student athletes are welcome to volunteer to join, but only two representatives from each team will have voting rights.

Expectations

- Actively serve and attend all SAAC meetings and sub-committee meetings.
- Act as a voice for his or her respective team.
- Inform his or her teammates and coaches about information discussed at SAAC meetings.

Meetings

Meetings are held weekly and begin with a short devotional led by a committee member. The group will then go over its agenda and later break into sub-committees to outline issues and plans. Sub-committees report back to the group for an overall discussion and end-action.

Committees

- Marketing and Fundraising: Markets events and brainstorms fundraising initiatives to help foster campus and community integration.
- Community Engagement: Continually looks for ways to support and help the community through activities and projects.
- S-A Welfare: Deals with changes, issues and suggestions concerning the NCAA and/or ACU Athletics. The S-A Welfare committee also helps with the organization and communication between the members of athletics teams and the SAAC. The committee looks for ways to promote and unify student-athletes on issues related to current events, Community in Schools partnerships, career development and other projects on campus.
- Campus/Team Integration: The committee will discuss the concepts of a campus-wide divide between athletes and non-athletes and will be committed to fostering a conversation on ways to improve the issue.

Officer Positions

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Social Media
- Chaplain

Athletics Compliance Office

Below are the points of contact for ACU Athletics Office of Compliance:

Chris Ballard cxb04f@acu.edu	Senior Associate AD for Administration	Teague 106 325-674-6454
Heather Wyatt hpw20a@acu.edu	Director of Compliance	Teague 105 325-674-2330
Krista Masci klc10b@acu.edu	Assistant Director of Compliance	Teague 145A 325-674-2800

Extra Benefits

Student-athletes are prohibited from receiving benefits from an employee of ACU or a representative of athletics interest (fans/alumni/boosters). These benefits include, but are not limited to:

- Use of a car
- Gifts
- Money
- Tickets for any kind for entertainment
- Payment of long distance phone calls
- Free or reduced cost room and/or board
- Meal at a restaurant
- Special discounts
- Payment arrangements or credit on a purchase

Student-athletes shall not accept anything of tangible value (food, cash, gifts, transportation etc.) from a person considered a booster or representative of athletics interest without the prior approval of the head coach and the compliance office. If you receive an offer of benefits such as those listed above, see your head coach or compliance coordinator prior to accepting the offer (always ask before you accept).

Use of Agents

You will be permanently ineligible for practice, competition and athletics aid if you either orally or in writing, agree to be represented by an agent. If you, your family, your friends or your guardians receive benefits from an agent (e.g., free tickets, meals, or other benefits) you will become ineligible. Please inform the Compliance Office of any contacts initiated by you or an agent.

Texas law prohibits agents from contacting you directly; they must go through ACU. ACU has a Professional Sports Counseling Panel that can help you with career-ending disability insurance, contracts, and analysis of draft position. Contact the compliance staff for more information about the Professional Sports Counseling Panel. You must receive approval from the compliance staff prior to purchasing any career-ending disability insurance.

There are many things to keep in mind when it comes to agents and advisors. The following entities have rules and regulations regarding the conduct of agents and advisors:

- Texas state law;
 - For example, Texas law requires agents (and advisors in some circumstances) to register with the state and only permits agents to initiate contact with student-athletes in certain situations (e.g., athlete-agent interview day and via mail).
- ACU's Compliance Office; and
- The professional governing body of the sport in which an agent represents players (e.g., the National Football League Players Association).

NCAA rules state that a student-athlete is ineligible if:

- She/He enters into a verbal or written agreement with an agent for representation for the purpose of marketing her/his athletics ability or reputation (including future sports negotiations); or
- She/He or her/his relative or friend accepts transportation or other benefits from an agent.

There are many circumstances in which someone who calls herself/himself an “advisor” actually meets the definition of an “agent” under NCAA rules and/or Texas law. In other words, it does not matter to the NCAA or Texas authorities how an individual refers to herself/himself.

Gambling

Sports wagering includes placing, accepting, or soliciting a wager (on a staff member’s or student-athlete’s own behalf or on behalf of others) of any type (any item of value, e.g., cash, shirt, dinner) with any individual or organization, on any intercollegiate, amateur, or professional team or contest. Examples of sports wagering include, but are not limited to, the use of a bookmaker or parlay card; Internet sports wagering; auctions in which bids are placed on teams, individuals or contests; and pools or fantasy leagues in which an entry fee is required and there is an opportunity to win a prize.

In other words:

- You may not place or accept a bet of any sort on any intercollegiate or professional sporting event.
- You may not give information to anyone who does place bets on intercollegiate or professional sports.

That means:

- No wagers on ANY professional/amateur/college/youth sports event, even those that do not involve Abilene Christian University.
- No sports “pools,” even those run by your friends or “fantasy leagues” that involves fees, prizes, or cash payouts.
- No internet gambling on sports events.
- No sports wagering using toll free numbers.
- No sports wagering, even if it is legal in that state or country (e.g., Las Vegas).
- No exchange of information about your team with ANYONE who gambles. In other words, no information about injuries, team plays, team morale, discipline problems, or anything else.

The Consequences:

- Once you participate in any sports wagering activity through the Internet, a bookmaker, or parlay card on any college or professional team or sports, or provide information to someone who does gamble, you are declared ineligible to compete.
- If you participate in any sports wagering activity through the Internet, a bookmaker, or parlay card on any team at ACU, you will be permanently ineligible.
- If you participate in any sports wagering activity through the Internet, a bookmaker, or parlay card on any other college or professional team, you will be suspended for one year (365 days) and lose one season of eligibility.
- You also run the risk of losing your scholarship, being expelled from school, being banned from other college and professional sports, and/or being arrested and charged with a state or federal crime.

Amateurism

You will **LOSE** your amateur status and eligibility if you:

- Use your athletic skill (directly or indirectly) for pay in any form in a sport including but not limited to endorsing a commercial product/service.
- Accept a promise of pay (even if such pay is to be received following completion of intercollegiate athletics participation).
- Receive (directly or indirectly) a salary, reimbursement of expenses or any other form of financial assistance from a pro sports organization based upon athletics skill or participation (except as permitted by NCAA rules and regulations, if you have questions contact the compliance office)
 - *Exception:* In individual sports, prize money MAY be accepted during each calendar year (January – December) if it does not exceed actual and necessary expenses and is provided only by the sponsor of the event. Student-athletes should complete an outside competition form prior to the event and a prize money declaration form after the event.
- Allow a coach, agent, your parents or anyone to market your athletic ability to a professional team.
- Compete on any pro athletics team and know (or had reason to know) that the team is a pro athletics team. Exception: You MAY be pro in one sport and retain eligibility in a different sport.
- Ask to be placed on the draft list or supplemental draft list of a professional league in that sport.
 - *Exception:* In men's basketball you MAY enter a pro draft each year during your college career without jeopardizing your eligibility as long as you remove your name no later than 10 days after the professional league combine, submit a declaration of intent to the athletics director, and are not drafted.
 - *Exception:* In women's basketball, you MAY enter a pro draft one time during your college career without jeopardizing your eligibility as long as you remove your name no later than 30 days after the draft, submit a declaration of intent to the athletics director, and are not drafted.
- Enter into an agreement (even for future representation) or accept any benefits from an agent.

Outside Sports Competition

Student-athletes may not participate as a member of any outside team in any non-collegiate, amateur competition during the academic year. Doing so will result in the loss of eligibility. It is permissible for student-athletes to participate in outside competitions as an individual during the academic year as long as you represent yourself and do not engage in such competition as a member of or receive expenses from an outside team. Student-athletes should seek Compliance Office approval prior to participating in any outside competition. Please note student-athletes may accept prize money based on your place finish or performance in an athletics event during each calendar year (January – December) so long as they prize money does not exceed the actual and necessary expenses and is only provided by the sponsor of the event. Again, student-athletes should complete an outside competition form prior to the event and a prize money declaration form after the event.

Promotional Activities/Community Service

A student-athlete's name, picture or appearance may be used by the University or recognized entity of the University (e.g., student organization, nonprofit agency), Southland Conference or a non-institutional charitable, education or nonprofit agency to support charitable or educational activities considered incidental to the student-athlete's participation in intercollegiate athletics, provided:

- The student-athlete does not miss class;
- The activity does not involve non-permissible sponsorship;
- Money derived from the activity goes directly to the non-profit agency; and
- The student-athlete does not endorse or promote any commercial product or service.

Sports Camps and Clinics

A student-athlete who is employed in any sports camp or clinic must meet the following requirements:

- Must perform duties that are of a general supervisory nature in addition to any coaching or officiating assignments;
- Compensation must be the going rate for camp counselors;

- A student-athlete who only lectures or demonstrates at the camp/clinic, may not receive compensation for his/her appearance at the camp/clinic.
- A student-athlete with remaining eligibility may not conduct his/her own camp/clinic.

Student-Athlete Employment/Providing Lessons for a Fee

Prior to any employment, all student-athletes must register the conditions of employment with the head coach and compliance office (including sport-related camps). ACU has employment form documents that are required prior to accepting employment. You can access these forms in ARMS.

Fee-for-Lesson Instructions

A student-athlete may earn money from employment without regard to the amount of financial aid or scholarship he or she receives. Student-athletes may be paid only for work actually performed and at a rate commensurate with the going rate for similar services. A student-athlete may receive compensation for teaching sport skills in his or her sport on a fee-for-lesson basis. However, no ACU facilities may be used and no playing lessons are permitted. Your compensation must be paid by the person receiving the lesson (or his or her family member) and you may not use your name, picture or appearance to promote or advertise the availability of fee-for-lesson sessions. Before you begin employment or provide lessons for a fee, please contact the Compliance Office to complete the appropriate paperwork required by the NCAA.

Good Sportsmanship

Abilene Christian University expects sportsman-like conduct of its student-athletes and will not tolerate any of the following behaviors:

- Physically abusing an official, coach, athlete, opponent, or spectator;
- Using obscene or inappropriate language or gestures to officials, opponents, team members, or spectators;
- Making public statements which are negative, controversial, or not in compliance with the department's policy on media relations;
- Violating generally recognized intercollegiate athletics standards associated with ACU as determined by the head coach and approved by the director of athletics.

NCAA Bylaw, Article 10 – Ethical Conduct is the driving force of good sportsmanship expectations at ACU.

Ethical Conduct

All participating student-athletes shall act with honesty and sportsmanship at all times so that intercollegiate athletics as a whole, their institutions and they, as individuals, shall represent the honor and dignity of fair play and the generally recognized high standards associated with wholesome competitive sports.

Unethical Conduct

Unethical conduct by a prospective or enrolled student-athlete or a current or former institutional staff member may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Refusal to furnish information relevant to an investigation of a possible violation of an NCAA regulation when requested to do so by the NCAA or the individual's institution;
- Knowing involvement in arranging for fraudulent academic credit or false transcripts for a prospective or an enrolled student-athlete;
- Knowing involvement in offering or providing a prospective or an enrolled student-athlete an improper inducement or extra benefit or improper financial aid;
- Knowingly furnishing the NCAA or the individual's institution false or misleading information concerning the individual's involvement in or knowledge of matters relevant to a possible violation of an NCAA regulation;

- Receipt of benefits by an institutional staff member for facilitating or arranging a meeting between a student-athlete and an agent, financial advisor or a representative of an agent or advisor
- Knowingly providing a student-athlete with a banned substance, impermissible supplement, or medications contrary to medical licensure, commonly accepted standards of care in sports medicine practice, or state or Federal law.
- Failure to provide complete and accurate information to the NCAA or institution's admissions office regarding an individual's academic record (e.g., schools attended, completion of coursework, grades, test scores);
- Fraudulence or misconduct in connection with entrance, placement, or academic examinations;
- Engaging in any athletics competition under an assumed name or with intent otherwise to deceive;
- Failure to provide complete and accurate information to the NCAA, the NCAA Eligibility Center or the institution's athletics department regarding an individual's amateur status.

NCAA Tobacco Products Policy

The use of tobacco products is prohibited by student-athletes and all game personnel (including coaches, trainers, managers, game officials, etc.) in all sports during practice and competition. Uniform penalties (as determined by the applicable rules-making committees and sports committees with rules making responsibilities) shall be established for such use.

Playing and Practice Limitations

Playing and Practice Season Limitations General Guidelines (exceptions do occur) are as follows:

In Season

A team that is "in-season" shall not participate in team-related activities for more than 20 hours per week. Student-athletes should not participate in team-related activities for more than four hours in any one-day. (24-hour period) In-Season, student-athletes should be provided one "off-day" per week during which no team-related activities are required.

Out of Season

A team that is out-of-season shall not participate in team/individual activities for more than 8 hours per week. It is permissible for the out-of-season segment to consist of four hours of skill instruction and four hours of conditioning each week. Out-of-Season, student-athletes should be provided two "off-days" per week during which no team-related activities are required.

During vacation periods and between academic terms when classes are not in session, there are no weekly or daily hour limitations; however, student-athletes must be provided one day off from all required athletically related activities per week.

Student-athletes will be randomly selected throughout the year to verify practice hours through the logging system. The logging system is in place as a check and balance monitoring system to verify hours. Student-athletes are expected to verify or make comments of discrepancies of hours reported.

Complimentary Admission

Complimentary admissions are a privilege and are not a right. Student-athletes not adhering to policies may lose their complimentary admission privileges. Each student-athlete may be provided complimentary admissions for up to four people through a pass list for each contest in the sport in which he or she participates. For post-season contests, each student-athlete may be provided complimentary admissions for up to six people through a pass list for each contest in the sport in which he or she participates during the postseason. The number of actual admissions may be less depending on availability.

- All guests receiving complimentary admissions will be required to present valid picture identification.
- You may not sell your complimentary admissions or exchange them for any item of value.
- You may not provide tickets or complimentary admissions to agents.

- You may not provide complimentary admissions to high school coaches (or other coaches) in which you have no natural connection with.
- You will be expected to meet any deadlines for requesting admissions and completing any forms necessary.

The complimentary admission process is administered using the ticket request system. ACU Athletes must be eligible with NCAA rules in order to request their complimentary admissions. All guests must be entered into your guest list in ARMS (Compliance Software) and tickets must be requested at least 24 hours prior to game time.

Hosting a Prospective Student-Athlete on an Official Visit

The role as a student-host is very important in the recruiting process at Abilene Christian University. Athletes have a responsibility to understand and abide by the NCAA (13.6.7.5), Southland Conference, and institutional regulations. Please carefully review the following rules:

- Only one student-athlete per day from this school can serve as an official host.
- No cash may be given to the visiting prospect or anyone accompanying the prospect.
- Vehicles may not be provided or arranged for by any coach, institutional staff member, or booster of the university. Never allow the recruit to use or drive your car.
- The host may not transport the prospect or anyone accompanying the prospect more than 30 miles from the campus.
- The host should not allow recruiting conversations to occur on or off campus between the prospect and a booster of the athletic program. (If an unplanned meeting occurs, only an exchange of greetings is permissible.)
- A visiting prospect may engage in recreational or workout activities. The recreational or workout activities cannot be designed to test the athletics ability of the prospect. A coach cannot be present during such activities. A student-athlete or prospect may not be required to report back to a coach or other athletics department staff member (e.g., strength coach, trainer, manager) any information related to the recreational or workout activities.
- The host may receive a complimentary admission when accompanying a prospect to a campus athletic event.
- Student host may not stay with the recruit in the hotel.
- Avoid putting the prospect in a compromising or questionable situation (alcohol, drugs, etc)
- The student host must abide by all Institutional and Department of Athletics official visit policies
- Only involve the visiting prospective student-athlete in uplifting and acceptable entertainment (sports games, movies, dining, etc.)

Violation of Compliance Regulations

If a student-athlete is aware of or suspects any type of violation, the student-athlete should immediately contact a member of the Compliance Office.

Transferring

Policy and Procedure for Notification of Transfer

The following are NCAA regulations on transferring to another institution:

NCAA Bylaw 13.1.1.3 - Four-Year College Prospective Student-Athletes. Four-Year College Prospective Student-Athletes. An athletics staff member or other representative of the institution's athletics interests shall not make contact with the student-athlete of another NCAA Division I institution, directly or indirectly, without first obtaining authorization through the notification of transfer process. Before making contact, directly or indirectly, with a student-athlete of an NCAA Division II or Division III institution, or an NAIA four-year collegiate institution, an athletics staff member or other representative of the institution's athletics interests shall comply with the rule of the applicable division or the NAIA rule for making contact with a student-athlete. [See Bylaw 19.1.2-(f).]

NCAA Bylaw 13.1.1.3.1 Notification of Transfer. A student-athlete may initiate the notification of transfer process by providing his or her institution with a written notification of transfer at any time. The student-athlete's institution shall enter his or her information into the national transfer database within two business days of receipt of a written notification of transfer from the student-athlete.

NCAA Bylaw 13.1.1.3.2 Written Policies. An institution shall have written policies related to the implications of a student-athlete providing written notification of transfer, including a description of services and benefits (e.g., academic support services, access to athletics facilities) that will or will not be provided to a student-athlete upon receipt of notification. Such policies shall be published and generally available to student-athletes (e.g., student-athlete handbook, institution's website).

NCAA Bylaw 15.3.5.1 Reduction, Cancellation or Nonrenewal Permitted. Institutional financial aid based in any degree on athletics ability may be reduced or canceled during the period of the award or reduced or not renewed for the following academic year or years of the student-athlete's five-year period of eligibility if the recipient:

- (f) Provides written notification of transfer (see Bylaw 13.1.1.3) to the institution; however, the student-athlete's financial aid may not be reduced or canceled until the end of the regular academic term in which written notification of transfer is received. If a student-athlete provides written notification of transfer to the institution between regular academic terms (winter break, summer break) the institution may reduce or cancel the financial aid immediately.

Notification of Transfer

Student-athletes wishing to transfer away from ACU to another institution affiliated with the NCAA are bound by NCAA Bylaw 13.1.1.3 and NCAA Bylaw 13.1.1.3.1. No communication, directly or indirectly, may occur with another institution until the written notification of transfer process is complete.

1. Student-athletes wishing to transfer shall submit their written notification of transfer on the official institutional Notification of Transfer form which may be found in ARMS.
2. The Compliance Staff will send an email notification to the Head Coach of the student-athletes written notification.
3. The student-athlete will receive a confirmation email that their notification of transfer form was completed and received by the Compliance Staff (the Head Coach will be included).
4. The institution (Compliance Staff) will enter the student-athlete's information into the NCAA Transfer Portal within two business days upon receipt of the completed Transfer Notification Form.
5. The student-athlete will receive a confirmation email from the NCAA their information has been input into the NCAA Transfer Portal (the Head Coach will be included).
6. The student-athlete will receive an email alerting them of any changes to their services and benefits and the one-time transfer exception appeal steps.
7. If the student-athlete desires to withdraw their name from the NCAA Transfer Portal, they must notify the institution (Compliance Staff) in writing.

NOTICE: Verbal notification by the student-athlete will not be accepted as written notification of transfer. Written notification of a student-athlete's desire to transfer by the Coaching Staff to the Compliance Staff will not be accepted as the student-athletes written notification to transfer. Student-athletes must submit their written notification through ARMS with the Notification of Transfer form.

Student-athletes wishing to transfer must acknowledge the following services and benefits may not be available to them after the written notification of transfer is completed:

- Academic support services (e.g., tutoring, advising, loaner computer, iPad, computer lab)
- Athletic facility use (e.g., weight room, training room)
- Medical/rehabilitation/training services
- Catered snacks
- Nutritionist
- Early registration
- Team awards

- Team issued apparel/equipment
- Cancellation of athletic aid

The student-athlete's information will remain in the NCAA Transfer Portal until he/she withdraws the notification or begins classes at his/her original institution or another institution during the subsequent academic year. If a student-athlete is found to have engaged in impermissible recruiting contacts (or tampering occurred) with an institution, he/she becomes ineligible to represent that institution in intercollegiate athletics.

Athletic Aid

NCAA Guidelines on Athletic Aid

Athletics aid is able to be provided to undergraduate students with eligibility remaining, graduate students with eligibility remaining, undergraduate students completing a degree, or a former student-athlete returning to complete an undergraduate degree. Student-athletes receiving athletics aid are reviewed on a case by case basis for an award and are expected to complete their undergraduate degrees in a timely manner.

Post-eligibility aid is not a guarantee and each case for the granting of post-eligibility aid is subject to a review process by the Athletic Department. Talk to your Head Coach and Compliance Office about any plans to apply for post-eligibility aid. Post-eligibility aid to complete a graduate degree is generally not granted.

The NCAA restricts the amount of aid student-athletes can receive. You may only receive other types of financial aid and scholarships up to the cost of attendance provided those other funds do not conflict with any accounting towards NCAA team limitations. Almost every type of aid you receive counts toward your individual limit and the institutional limit. All aid must be administered through ACU.

If you receive an award that will place you and/or the team over the NCAA limits, you will have to relinquish the outside aid or have your athletics aid reduced. Any outside scholarships must be reported to ACU and you must complete the Outside Scholarship Report process available in ARMS. The compliance staff can answer any of your questions.

What is *not* covered by an athletic scholarship?

- Parking permits & fines
- Mail Box Rental
- ID replacement fees
- Damage fees
- Medical Services
- Non-Athletic Injury/Illness
- Enrollment/Housing Deposits
- Library fines
- Schedule change fees

*If a student-athlete has a question about whether or not a charge is covered by their scholarship they need to speak to the compliance office as soon as possible. In conjunction with athletics and financial aid, student-athletes also have responsibility to ensure their account balances are accurate at the end of the semester and all charges have been settled. Once the next semester begins, athletic aid will NOT be applied for charges for any previous term.

All athletic scholarships are awarded directly to student's ACU student accounts. Students receiving vouchers/stipends to live off-campus **must** set up Direct Deposit through the Accounts Payable Office to receive their funds.

NCAA Student Athlete Assistance Fund

A student-athlete qualifies for the NCAA Special Assistance Fund by receiving a Pell Grant. The NCAA Special Assistance Fund allows for reimbursement for certain items including, but not limited to, the following:

- Clothing
- Medical expenses (except those covered by another insurance program)
- Hearing aids
- Vision therapy
- Off-campus psychological counseling
- Travel expenses for parents or student-athletes related to family emergencies
- Purchase of expendable academic course supplies that are required for all students enrolled in the course (e.g. notebooks, pens, and rental fees for computers and cameras)

For more information regarding the NCAA Special Assistance Fund, contact the Compliance Office in Teague Athletics Offices.

Reductions and Cancellations of Athletics Aid During the Scholarship Period

Athletic Scholarships may vary in length and amounts. The athletic aid agreement specifically states the academic years of the award and amount of financial support. Any aid beyond what is signed for is not guaranteed. ACU Athletics will not cancel or reduce an athletics scholarship during the scholarship period unless it is for one of the following reasons:

- The student-athlete quits the team.
- The student-athlete becomes ineligible for intercollegiate competition for any reason.
- The student-athlete fraudulently misrepresents information on an application, letter of intent or financial aid agreement.
- The student-athlete engages in serious misconduct that warrants substantial disciplinary penalty by the University's regular disciplinary authority. Examples include, but are not limited to: destruction or defacement of University property, engaging in unlawful conduct, and selling and/or using illegal paraphernalia.
- The student-athletes aid would cause ACU to exceed the NCAA limits.
- The student-athlete violates any athletic department policies.
- The student-athlete violates any written team rules.
- The student-athlete submits written notification of transfer.

Athletics performance or injury may not serve as a basis for cancellation or reduction of athletics aid during the term of the award.

If athletics aid is canceled or reduced during the scholarship period, the student-athlete will receive an email to their ACU email account from the Financial Aid Office that explains the change or cancellation. The student-athlete also will be notified in the email of a right to appeal the reduction or cancellation to a committee that is independent of the Department of Athletics. The appeal procedures are in this handbook.

Renewals, Reductions, and Cancellations of Athletics Aid After the Term of the Award

After the stated scholarship period in the scholarship agreement has expired, NCAA rules permit the head coach to renew, reduce or cancel aid for any reason. ACU must notify the student-athlete in writing as to whether athletics aid is being renewed, reduced or canceled by July 1 following the completion of the previous scholarship period. If aid is renewed, the student-athlete will receive a new scholarship agreement to sign and return to the compliance staff. If aid is reduced from previous levels of support or not renewed and the student-athlete has eligibility remaining, the student-athlete will be notified by the Director of Financial Aid.

Reduction and cancellation notices are sent by email by a representative of Financial Aid to the student-athletes ACU email account and will include a statement of your right to appeal the reduction or non-

renewal to a committee that is independent of the Department of Athletics. The appeal procedures are included in this handbook.

Athletics Academic Office

Below are the points of contact for ACU Athletics Office of Academics:

Sarah Shipp set05e@acu.edu	Assistant AD for Academics	Teague 105 325-674-2883
Melissa Sullivan mes17b@acu.edu	Academic Coordinator	Teague 145C 325-674-2279

The academic team is in place to help you achieve academic success while you are a student-athlete. **If you need assistance or if you are experiencing academic difficulties, please contact Academics.**

Wildcat Academics

Wildcat Academics, in conjunction with Abilene Christian University, provides support services for current student athletes in an effort to increase academic and personal success. Student-athletes are encouraged to develop personal responsibility, intelligent decision making, and leadership skills through the provision of educational experiences both inside and outside of the classroom. Wildcat Academics is committed to assisting each student-athlete with successful completion of a degree and graduation from Abilene Christian University. Further, we seek to improve the University's Graduation Rate and Academic Progress Rate annually through evaluation of student-athletes' academic skills, assessment, and performance outcomes.

Academic Success

Essentials for Academic Success

There is a direct correlation between classroom attendance and academic success. All student-athletes are expected to attend every class session.

Some classes will be missed due to a team's travel schedule. Every attempt will be made to keep such conflicts to a minimum. From the first day of the semester, the student-athlete must be hyperaware of class meetings that will be missed for athletic travel. It is the student-athlete's responsibility to speak to the professor and plan for how to cover the missed class content ***prior*** to the absence occurring.

Wildcat Academics expects you to engage in the following behaviors, as doing so will help you achieve academic success:

- Arrive 5 minutes before class starts, have all materials out and ready by the time the class is scheduled to start, sit up front, and actively participate and listen the entire time.
- Make use of appropriate campus resources in order to meet your academic goals.
- Consult with your Academic Coordinator about your academics on a regular basis.
- Become an active participant in the advisor/advisee relationship.
- Commit to enrolling in and completing 15 credit hours during each long semester so you will stay on pace for graduation.
- Take responsibility for understanding your NCAA eligibility, your progress towards degree and the role your academics plays in both.
- Understand and follow institutional policies on academic integrity.
- Actively pursue the ultimate goal of obtaining a baccalaureate degree.

Attendance of Class

The ACU Athletic Department expects that student-athletes will only miss class when traveling with their team. Missing class for any reason other than team travel can result in your removal from the team and/or the cancelation of athletic aid.

ACU requires each student to attend at least 75% of all class meetings. If you miss more than 25% of a course, you can automatically receive an “F” in that course. Professors will be notified of all absences due to competition in university-sponsored events. An “excused” absence (i.e., absence due to participation in a university-sponsored event) still counts as a “miss” in the class attendance calculation, so be careful about unnecessarily missing class. If absences, excused or unexcused, exceed the allowable number of absences in the course, student’s are subject to receiving a Withdraw Fail (WF) in the course. **When practice/workout/treatment schedules conflict with class schedules, student-athletes are required to attend class; practice/workout/treatment is never an “excused” absence.**

Advanced Approval for Absence on a University Sponsored Event. As a student-athlete, each time you are absent from a class to travel with your sport, you are attending a university sponsored event. Per University policy, you are allowed to miss the following number of classes for travel:

<u>Course Meeting Days</u>	<u># Absences allowed for Travel</u>
Monday, Wednesday, Friday (MWF)	9
Tuesday, Thursday (TR)	6
Once a week courses (Labs, evening courses, etc.)	3

It is your responsibility as a student-athlete to keep track of the number of absences you have in each course, and to be in communication with your professor about any missed course periods.

Students who are not scheduled to travel with the team OR who, at the last minute, do NOT end up traveling with the team, MUST attend class!

Missed Classes. It is your responsibility to communicate with professors regarding missed assignments and tests **prior** to your absence. Faculty members are expected to work with student-athletes to allow for the completion of class work and assignments when student-athletes make appropriate arrangements with their professors **prior** to the “excused” activity. Faculty typically include their office hours, an email address, and a phone number on the course syllabus, so there is no reason you cannot contact them **prior** to the missed class.

If you miss a class because you are sick, contact your professor immediately to explain you are not feeling well and that you will soon be visiting with Athletic Training to determine what is wrong. Then, go to Athletic Training and get your health evaluated. Trainers can help determine your level of illness and quickly arrange diagnosis and treatment when needed. All student-athletes are required to visit with an Athletic Trainer if they are missing class due to an illness. Failure to do so can result in your removal from the team and/or the cancelation of athletic aid.

If you miss class because you have an emergency, contact your professor, coach, and the academic team immediately to explain the circumstances in detail.

At Risk Students

Academic Coordinators, in conjunction with coaches and other University staff, will review student-athletes’ academic files to identify those who may be considered ‘at-risk’. Those student-athletes who are identified as at-risk will be required to meet with their Academic Coordinator on a weekly basis. The purpose of these meetings is to mentor the student-athlete and help devise an academic plan that will best fit the individual. All students deemed ‘at risk’ are required to be in study hall at times assigned by their academic coordinator.

Academic Advisors (located in Wildcat Central)

Academic advisors in a student-athlete’s major field of study are the primary contact for specific degree plan information. They have thorough knowledge of your specific catalog year and the requirements necessary to complete your degree successfully. Your academic advisor works closely with the athletic department to foster academic success and ensure academic eligibility. Any time you are in communication with your academic advisor, you should remind them that you are a student-athlete and what sport you play.

Progress Reports

A progress report for each student-athlete will be sent to all their course professors at least 3 times per long semester. The progress report will assess the student's current grade, participation level in the classroom, number of absences, and any other factors that will help the Academic Coordinator gain a holistic view of the student's academic progress in each course.

Study Hall

All student athletes who are receiving athletic aid are required to attend study hall for a set number of hours each week. The number of hours is determined by several varying factors and can differ for each student athlete. Your sport's academic coordinator will communicate, at the start of the semester, the number of hours you are required to complete each week. Throughout the semester, the number of required hours you complete can increase or decrease at the discretion of your academic coordinator. Failure to complete your study hall hours in any given week can result in your removal from the team and/or the cancelation of athletic aid.

Study Hall takes place in the Athletics Academic Center (Teague, Room 145). Upon arriving to study hall, students must sign in. Any student who is disruptive or distracted during study hall will be dismissed and the time they completed during that session will not be counted. After completion of study hall times, students will need to sign out.

Incoming Transfers. All transfer students in their first semester at ACU are required to be in study hall at times assigned by their academic coordinator. Failure to show up for your assigned times will result in (1) the time to be made up at a time chosen by their academic coordinator, and (2) the missed session being reported to the student's coach. A student athlete who fails to attend their assigned times repeatedly is subject to removal from the team and/or the cancellation of athletic aid.

Incoming Freshman. All incoming freshman are required to complete six (6) hours of study hall each week during open study hall hours. Any freshman who does not meet their requirement of six (6) hours is subject to negative consequences from both the academic staff and their coaches. A student athlete who fails to complete their six (6) hours of weekly study hall is subject to removal from the team and/or the cancelation of athletic aid.

Team Study Hall. Some coaches require their team to meet and participate in team study hall hours. Regardless of if you are required by Wildcat Academics to participate in study hall, you must attend your team study hall. **These study halls are different and one cannot substitute for the other.**

Textbook Scholarships

If you are receiving athletic aid to pay for your course textbooks, then you are considered to be on book scholarship. Per NCAA Bylaw 15.2.3 you may only purchase required or recommended course materials that are listed on your course syllabus.

Student-Athletes on book scholarship will be contacted by the academic team with information on how to pick up their textbooks; they do not need to order books online or visit the bookstore to purchase their textbooks. If a student-athlete purchases a course material with their own money **prior** to speaking to an academic coordinator, the purchase may not be reimbursed by the athletic department.

During the semester, student-athletes are responsible for keeping track of their course materials and keeping them in usable condition. At the end of every semester, the student-athlete is required to visit the bookstore and return **all** course materials bought and purchased by ACU Athletics. Textbooks that are not returned, or returned with damage, will be charged to the students account and the student will be responsible for paying the charge.

There is a limited supply of iPads, calculators, and laptops that are available to be checked out through Wildcat Academics. If you are in a course that requires the use of one of these devices, please visit with your academic coordinator. During the semester, student-athletes are responsible for keeping track of

their device and keeping it in usable condition. At the end of every semester, the student-athlete is required to return ***all*** devices checked out from ACU Athletics. Devices that are not returned, or that are returned in worse condition, will be charged to the students account and the student will be responsible for paying the charge.

Tutoring

Upon request, tutoring is available to any student-athlete enrolled in a general education course at ACU. Student athletes who qualify to be a member of the Alpha Scholarship Program are encouraged to use those resources to their full capacity, including a request for a tutor. If you do not qualify for Alpha services, please work with the academic team to plan for individual or group tutoring.

Tutoring Tips:

- It is important to ask for help in a class early! Do not wait until right before a test, the night before an assignment is due, or when you find that class work is above your head and you are lost.
- It is vital to communicate with your professors if you do not understand something or will miss class. Professors want to help. Never be afraid to ask questions.
- Read the class syllabus before the first day of class or as soon as you get a copy and treat it as your road map for navigating through class. Put important due dates (i.e. tests, assignments) on your mobile device or in a planner.
- Take advantage of the tutoring offered by different departments & do it before the class becomes a struggle.
- Make use of the ACU Writing Center and let them help you be the best writer you can be.
- Form a study group and study often.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is essential to the most effective development of a person's intellectual skills and abilities. The Athletics Department expects academic integrity to be a major part of the character of each of its student-athletes. Written or other work which a student submits must be the product of his/her own efforts. Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty, including dishonesty involving computer technology, are prohibited.

Academic Integrity is defined as academic work completed as assigned for each class by the individual or group responsible for the work. Academic work includes but is not limited to reading assignments, assessments, examinations and tests, attendance at required out-of-class activities, written or oral presentations, and laboratory experiments and research.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Observing the work of other students during any examination or other assignments where inappropriate.
- Claiming credit for an attendance or service activity without attending or performing the activity.
- Gaining access to the content of any examination prior to its being given.
- Receiving, giving, or using unauthorized aid on an examination.
- Informing any person(s) of the contents of any examination prior to its being given.
- Providing answers for any examination or assigned work when not specifically authorized to do so by the instructor(s).
- Offering to sell or buy unauthorized aids or information for an assignment or examination.
- Allowing other members of a group to provide a disproportionate fraction of a required group project or activity.
- Collusion with (an)other person(s) on an assignment for which the instructor has specified independent work.
- Using the work of (an)other person(s) in place of independent work.
- Permitting formal or informal tutors or editors to provide more than tutoring or editing, such as completing or rewriting work assigned by the instructor for the individual student to complete or write,

or telling the student the steps in solving a problem rather than guiding the student to discover the proper steps.

- Altering, misrepresenting, or falsifying a transcript, course record or graded work to gain unearned academic credit.
- Agreeing to change or have changed academic records, including arranging for a grade or credit not earned.
- Offering or accepting a bribe related to academic work or records.
- Written or oral presentation of falsified materials and facts, including but not limited to the results of interviews, laboratory experiments, and field-based research.
- Written or oral presentation of the results of research or laboratory experiments without the research or experiment having been performed.

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Intentional or unintentional failure to give credit to sources used in a work in an attempt to present the work as one's own.
- Submitting for credit in whole or in part the work of others.
- Submission of paper(s) or project(s) obtained from any source, such as a research service or a club paper file, as one's own.
- Submission of paper(s) or projects(s) that you have previously submitted as coursework at any other school you have attended.

Please refer to the [ACU Academic Integrity Policy](#) for further information.

Any student who violates the university's academic integrity policy is subject to removal from the team and/or the cancelation of athletic aid.

Academic Integrity Pledge for Student-Athletes

"I am committed to being a person of integrity. I pledge, as a member of the Abilene Christian University community, to abide by and uphold the standards of academic integrity contained in the ACU Academic Policies. I understand that a violation of this policy may result in my immediate removal from my team and/or the immediate cancelation of my athletic aid."

Chapel

As a student at Abilene Christian University, you are required to earn 55 spiritual formation credits in each long semester to fulfill the university's chapel requirement. You should only miss chapel on days in which you attend a university sponsored event. Failure to earn your 55 spiritual formation credits may result in the student being placed on Chapel Probation during the following semester.

Student-Athlete Chapel

Once a month all student-athletes will meet at a location to be determined for student-athlete chapel. Look for scheduling information to be posted in the Teague SEC and Moody Coliseum or check with your coaches. This chapel is mandatory for ALL athletes.

Missing Chapel

If you miss chapel for non-sponsored university events, it is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to contact the chapel office and attempt to get that absence removed from your chapel attendance record.

Please consult the [ACU Student Handbook](#) for further details about the chapel policy of the university.

NCAA Academic Requirements

Grade Point Average

All students at ACU are required to keep their term GPA and their cumulative GPA above a 2.0 in order to avoid Academic Probation and/or Suspension by the university.

Student-Athletes have an additional cumulative GPA requirement set by the NCAA. The GPA requirements are as follows:

- 1.8 by start of your sophomore year
- 1.9 by start of your junior year
- 2.0 by start of your senior year; this GPA must be maintained until graduation

The minimum required cumulative GPA to graduate with a degree from ACU is a 2.0. All student-athletes should be aware that certain majors have GPA requirement higher than a 2.0; failure to meet that requirement may result in the student being forced by the department to change their major. It is your responsibility to know the required GPA for your major and to maintain that GPA at all times.

Progress Towards Degree

Depending on classification, a student-athlete who successfully completes 24 to 36 credit hours in a 12-month period towards their specific degree plan are progressing toward a degree at a satisfactory rate.

In order to meet full-time enrollment status, student-athletes must enroll in at least 12 credit hours per semester. Student-athletes must pass a minimum of 6 hours each semester (9 hours for football student-athletes in the fall) and a minimum of 18 hours during the academic year or they will not be eligible. Student-athletes who become academically ineligible are subject to immediate removal from their team and/or cancelation of their athletic aid.

Degree plan percentages and grade point averages must be calculated for additional satisfactory progress requirements per NCAA Bylaw 14.4. The chart listed below provides a summary of the NCAA requirements in regards to academics progress. This chart is a brief overview of the requirements, please visit with you academic coordinator for more information.

NCAA REQUIREMENTS			
Entering 2nd Year of Enrollment	Entering 3rd Year of Enrollment	Entering 4th Year of Enrollment	Entering 5th Year of Enrollment
<input type="checkbox"/> 24 semester credits <input type="checkbox"/> 18 credits earned during academic year <input type="checkbox"/> 90% of GPA for graduation (certify term by term) <input type="checkbox"/> 6 credits/term <input type="checkbox"/> 9 credits/fall (MFB)	<input type="checkbox"/> 40% of degree requirements <input type="checkbox"/> 18 credits earned during academic year <input type="checkbox"/> 95% of GPA for graduation (certify term by term) <input type="checkbox"/> 6 credits/term <input type="checkbox"/> 9 credits/fall (MFB)	<input type="checkbox"/> 60% of degree requirements <input type="checkbox"/> 18 credit earned during academic year <input type="checkbox"/> 100% of GPA for graduation (certify term by term) <input type="checkbox"/> 6 credits/term <input type="checkbox"/> 9 credits/fall (MFB)	<input type="checkbox"/> 80% of degree requirements <input type="checkbox"/> 18 credit earned during academic year <input type="checkbox"/> 100% of GPA for graduation (certify term by term) <input type="checkbox"/> 6 credits/term <input type="checkbox"/> 9 credits/fall (MFB)

Declaration of A Degree Plan

All student-athletes must designate a program of study leading toward a specific bachelor degree prior to the third year of enrollment (fifth semester). NCAA bylaw 14.4 mandates the student-athlete meet satisfactory progress toward that specific degree.

It is the student-athlete's responsibility to meet with their Academic Coordinator to discuss their degree plan before officially declaring their major. Doing so will ensure that the student athlete will be athletically eligible in that program. Once reviewed and approved by the Academic Coordinator, student-athletes should visit centralized advising in Wildcat Central to declare a degree.

Change of Major or Concentration

Before a student-athlete can change their major, they must first meet with their Academic Coordinator. You will need to address the purpose behind the change, how it will affect your athletic eligibility, and review degree progress.

If a student-athlete desires to change the concentration of their current major, they must first meet with their Academic Coordinator to discuss how the change might affect eligibility and progress towards degree.

Change of Course Schedule

Before a student-athlete can **withdraw from a course or add/drop a course** from their schedule, **the student-athlete is REQUIRED to contact their Academic Coordinator** to discuss potential effects the change may have on the student-athletes NCAA or academic status. Failure to meet with your Academic Coordinator first could render you ineligible to practice or compete with your sport. **Be aware that full-time undergraduate students may not withdraw from the following classes:**

- BIBL 101;
- ENGL 003/004, 106/006, 107/007
- MATW 019
- UNIV 011

University policies regarding adding and dropping classes, including charges and/or refunds, may be found in the online ACU catalog.

NOTICE: You place your eligibility at risk if you do not visit the Athletic Department prior to making any request for changes to your major, concentration, or course schedule.

Media Relations Staff

Chris Macaluso
cjm11a@acu.edu

Assistant Director of Athletics for
Media Relations

Moody 106
325-674-6171

Athletics Social Media Policy

Social Media Sites

Internet social media sites provide individuals with an opportunity to interact with friends and colleagues while being exposed to a largely unrestricted consortium of new social interaction. Postings on personal profiles, groups and chat rooms are in the public domain and easily accessible by anyone including reporters, parents, coaches, predators, employers, graduate school admissions officials...**ANYONE**. Once information is posted, it can be retrieved easily by computer savvy individuals *even after it has been deleted*.

Department of Athletics Policy

Participation in intercollegiate athletics at Abilene Christian University is a privilege, *not a right*. It is expected that student-athletes maintain and demonstrate behavior **AT ALL TIMES** that represents the highest level of Christ-like behavior, integrity, honesty, good sportsmanship, character, and dignity that clearly characterize participation in intercollegiate athletics at Abilene Christian University. **While the Department of Athletics does not prohibit student-athlete involvement with social media communities, these high standards encompass comments and postings (written or pictorial) made to these sites.** As a condition of participation, student-athletes are required to provide the athletic department with unconditional access to all social media accounts.

The Athletic Department reserves the right to take action against any currently enrolled student-athlete, any person receiving athletically related aid, or any person part of an official support group engaged in behavior that is deemed unacceptable or inappropriate or violates NCAA, University, Department, or team rules, including such behavior that occurs on social media or internet sites. This action may include education, counseling, suspension or termination from the team, and reduction or non-renewal of any athletically related aid.

Recommendations

The safest and most unambiguous way to prevent embarrassing scenarios and likely punitive consequences is to refrain from the over-use of social media sites. However, should you choose to participate, you should ensure any comments and/or postings are consistent with University, Department and team rules and they present you in a manner that meets these expectations. For your safety and privacy, refrain from posting and promptly remove any personally identifiable information such as telephone numbers, address, class schedule, and places frequented as well as any photos you may have posted. Alert the Athletic Department of any sites that falsely appear to be yours as this could constitute identify theft, and the University will assist your efforts to have the offensive material and/or site removed.

Ask yourself these questions:

- Are these sites contributing to your team and school's image, enhancing or hurting your reputation?
- If the local media starts surfing around, will they find images or posts that would embarrass you or your team?
- If discovered, would these sites and/or postings result in consequences (i.e. team suspension, removal from team, loss of scholarship) detrimental to you and/ or your team?
- Would these postings violate team, department, or university policy? Not knowing is not an excuse!
- If a potential employer starts surfing around, could it cost you a job after college?
- Do you realize that you can be held legally accountable for what you might post about others online?
- GIVE STRONG CONSIDERATION TO LOCKING OR MAKING YOUR ACCOUNT PRIVATE.

Things to Remember:

- You are an ambassador of Abilene Christian University and are always in the public eye. Do not post information or images online that would embarrass you, your team, or ACU.
- *Never* share financial, personal, and sensitive information.
- What you post about others is just as important as what you post about yourself!
- *Never* post any inappropriate visual content, it can only lead to damaged reputations, unwanted attention, and lasting negative and severe consequences.
- Information posted in the internet can never be *entirely* erased!
- Know who you are associating with, accept friend requests wisely...befriending strangers online is not a good or safe idea.
- You may not have control over what others post about you, but you do have control over what behavior you demonstrate that may lead to unwanted or embarrassing postings.
- **THINK BEFORE YOU POST!!!**

Dealing with Media

It is the policy of ACU Athletics for all media requests for administrators, coaches, or student-athletes to go through the ACU Athletics Media Relations office. The media relations office will set up requested interviews, both face-to-face and telephone interviews. ACU Athletics Media Relations policy is to not give out contact information (cell phone number or email address) for any administrator, coach, or student-athlete to anyone in the media. If an administrator, coach or student-athlete is contacted by a journalist (professional or student) without first gaining the necessary permission from the media relations office, please re-direct the journalist to the media relations staff.

Dealing with The Optimist

At all times the reporters / journalists for The Optimist are looking for stories just as much as professional journalists. You might see them in class or on campus, but don't be free with information that pertains to your team, your teammates, injuries, etc. The Optimist and its journalists are to be treated the same way you would treat a professional journalist. In many cases, the journalists at The Optimist are more aware of what's going on within our teams than local newspaper or TV reporters, so be careful what you say. It could be the next headline or social media topic.

Institutional Policies and Procedures

Hazing Policy

ACU will not tolerate hazing as defined by Texas law. Moreover, ACU strongly discourages any action which degrades, intimidates, humiliates, or endangers any individual. The University reserves the right, for its administrative disciplinary purposes, to define conduct as “hazing” whether or not it would constitute hazing under the Texas law. All acts of hazing and any act which transgresses ACU’s Student Handbook will receive the full range of discipline set forth by the current Student Handbook. Ignorance of Christian principles, cultural meanings, and Texas law will not constitute immunity from appropriate University discipline, including dismissal from the University.

“Hazing” means any intentional knowing, or reckless act, occurring on or off the campus of an educational institution, by one person alone or acting with others, directed against a student that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization whose members are students at an educational institution.

The term includes but is not limited to:

- A. any type of **physical brutality**, such as
 - whipping,
 - beating,
 - striking,
 - branding,
 - electronic shocking,
 - placing of a harmful substance on the body,
 - or similar activity;
- B. any type of **physical activity**, such as:
 - sleep deprivation,
 - exposure to the elements,
 - confinement in a small space,
 - calisthenics or
 - other activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk or harm;
- C. any activity involving **consumption of a food, liquid, alcoholic beverage, liquor, drug** or other substance which subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or which adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student;
- D. any activity that **intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism**, that subjects the student to:
- E. extreme mental stress

Any incident of hazing will be investigated and may result in suspension from team, loss of athletic scholarship, or even dismissal from the ACU Athletic Program.

For more information about the Hazing Policy, including how to report a hazing violation, please visit the ACU Hazing Policy posted on the ACU Dean of Students website.

Anti-Harassment Policy

ACU Athletics strives to provide a safe and uplifting environment for all student-athletes. In alignment with the University, we take any report of harassment seriously. This policy addresses Discriminatory and Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Assault, Stalking, and Relationship Violence.

- A. “Harassment” - includes Discriminatory Harassment or Sexual Harassment, as defined below.
 - “Discriminatory Harassment” - any detrimental action based on an individual’s sex, religion, race, age, color, national origin, veteran’s status, disability, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law when such conduct:

- is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it unreasonably interferes with or limits the individual's work or educational performance or one's ability to participate in or benefit from the University's educational program or activity; or
 - creates a working, learning, or living environment that a reasonable person would find intimidating, hostile, or offensive.
 - "Sexual Harassment" - unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature including unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, including Sexual Misconduct, Exploitation, Stalking, or Relationship Violence.
 - Sexual harassment can occur regardless of the relationship, position and respective sex of the parties. Same-sex harassment violates this policy as does harassment by a student of a faculty member or a subordinate employee of his/her supervisor.
- B. "Sexual Misconduct" - a broad term encompassing any non-consensual physical contact of a sexual nature that varies in severity and consists of a range of behaviors or attempted behaviors.
- C. "Relationship Violence" - includes both Domestic and Dating Violence. Domestic Violence includes violent misdemeanor and felony offenses committed by the victim's current or former spouse or intimate partner, a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, or person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under domestic or family violence law, or any adult or youth protected under domestic or family violence law. Dating Violence means sexual or physical abuse or threats of such abuse by a person who has been in a romantic or intimate relationship with the victim. Whether there was such relationship will be gauged by its length, type, and frequency of interaction.

Reporting Options

While it may be difficult, the university encourages those who have experienced any form of Harassment to immediately seek available assistance and report the incident promptly not only to protect your own physical/emotional well-being but to protect others as well. Before reporting, it is important to understand that different people on campus have varying responsibilities regarding what they have to do once they receive a report.

1. Direct Reporting to Anti-Harassment Co-Coordinators - Reports can be made directly to one of the two Anti-Harassment Co-Coordinator, whose information is listed below, or a Deputy Coordinator. For compliance purposes, these Co-Coordinators are the Title IX Coordinators for staff/faculty and students respectively.

Wendy Jones Director of Human Resources ADM, Room 213 325-674-2359 jonesw@acu.edu	Sherita Nickerson Title IX Coordinator 1626 Campus Court 325-674-6802 sherita.nickerson@acu.edu
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2. Anonymous Reporting - Anonymous reports can be submitted online or by calling the anonymous hotline: 325-674-2594. This information goes to the ACU Office of General Counsel, who oversees the hotline, and will then be provided to one of the Co-Coordinators.
3. Confidential Reporting - If a person desires to identify themselves but desires that the details of the incident not be reported to the Co-Coordinator, they are encouraged to speak with one of the following: one of the two on-campus Student Advocates; on or off-campus mental health professional or health care service provider; off-campus rape crisis resources; or off-campus clergy. See Anti-Harassment Resources for contact information about making a confidential reporting.
4. Reporting to Responsible Employee - The university considers all other university employees (besides the Student Advocates and health care professionals mentioned above) and Student Organization Sponsors to be "Responsible Employees." This means that if they receive reports about Harassment, they must promptly share that information with the appropriate Co-Coordinator, who can consider requests that the school maintain the reporter's confidentiality.

For more details about ACU's Anti-Harassment Policy and reporting options, please visit their website on: <http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/hr/title-ix/anti-harassment-policy.html>

Sexual Assault Prevention

Sexual violence – including sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking and intimate partner violence – is embedded in American society and affects people at all socio-economic levels in our culture. Institutions of higher education and their athletics programs are not immune to the attitudes and behaviors that contribute to sexual violence, a major public health threat that demands a strong and comprehensive public health response.

Federal law requires each college and university to provide a safe, nondiscriminatory environment in which students can pursue – without threat – their academic, athletic, recreational and social interests. The NCAA constitution, too, reinforces those requirements for its member schools. Compliance with federal laws, state laws and institutional policies to maintain a safe campus environment is the responsibility of all staff and departments that comprise the campus community.

Athletics must ensure all activities and environments under its oversight protect the safety, health and well-being of current and prospective student-athletes. Athletics has a unique opportunity to leverage the close and influential relationships shared by student-athletes, coaches and athletics staff to promote a healthy and safe culture.

We encourage all prospective and current student-athletes to take advantage of any and all on-campus training, seminars, and workshops that help educate and empower student-athletes to make wise and safe decisions. Educational programming may be offered in the form of:

- Orientation Activities
- Team Meetings
- National Awareness Months
- Team Building Activities
- Brochures or other educational handouts
- Email newsletters

Successful sexual assault prevention requires student-athlete commitment to ensuring all students are treated with respect, dignity and concern for their welfare. Sexual violence exacts a huge cost on victims/survivors, their families, people who care about them, their communities and society. Girls and women of all ages are disproportionately victimized, and when their numbers are combined with those of male victims/survivors, it is clear that sexual violence continues to occur in alarming proportions in our communities and throughout society.

Athletics demonstrates its commitment to culture change and campus safety by holding all members of the athletics department responsible for campus safety. Athletics has a unique opportunity to affect change among its student-athletes and within the athletics community. The voice, visibility and size of athletics enable it to be a major part of a solution that makes campuses safe for all students.

Grievance Procedure

Abilene Christian University Department of Athletics is committed to resolving all complaints or grievances brought to its attention in the most equitable fashion possible for all persons concerned. When a student-athlete wishes to submit a complaint or grievance regarding another student-athlete, a coach, athletics department staff member, faculty member or any other University employee, the circumstances involved in the grievance vary greatly. Depending on the nature and sensitivity of the particular grievance, the student-athlete may or may not feel comfortable initiating the grievance process within the athletics department. In some cases, the student-athlete may feel more comfortable initiating the process with another campus department or authority by utilizing the ACU Student Complaint Policy (details available under the Academic Policies portion of the ACU Office of the Provost website). ACU Athletics encourages

its student-athletes to speak up whenever the student-athlete feels that he or she has been treated unfairly. The student-athlete should initiate the grievance process through the procedures outlined below.

Furthermore, when a coach or other ACU staff member receives a complaint/grievance from a student-athlete, it is their responsibility to ensure that the grievance is treated seriously and as confidentially as possible under the circumstances [Note: Some complaints (e.g., sexual harassment) must be reported to supervisors and the Senior Woman Administrator (SWA) immediately as a matter of law and institutional policy]. Retaliation for reporting a grievance or participating in the complaint process is strictly prohibited. Such retaliation against any person is a serious violation of this policy and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Grievance Process

Step 1: Whenever possible, a student-athlete should attempt to resolve the issue directly with the other person(s) involved. (Note: sexual harassment must be reported directly to the Title IX coordinator immediately at 674-2353).

Step 2: If the student-athlete cannot reach a satisfactory resolution of the issue through direct interaction, or if the student-athlete is uncomfortable making direct contact with the other person(s) for any reason, the student-athlete should report the grievance to the Head Coach and the Sport Administrator who oversees the student-athlete's sport (see list below). If the grievance involves the Head Coach, the student-athlete should report the grievance to the Sport Administrator.

- Allen Ward – Football, Men's Basketball, Women's Basketball
- Steve Harrell – Softball, Cross Country, Track & Field
- Drew Long – Baseball, Soccer, Volleyball, Golf, Tennis

If the grievance involves an academic issue (e.g., problems with a faculty member, tutor), the student-athlete may initiate the grievance process with their Academic Coordinator. If the grievance involves the Academic Coordinator, the student-athlete may initiate the grievance process with the Head Coach or Sport Administrator.

Step 3: If the issue cannot be resolved by the individuals involved in Step 2, or if the student-athlete is uncomfortable with initiating the grievance process with the individuals mentioned in Step 2, the student-athlete may report the grievance to the Director of Athletics or Faculty Athletics Representative.

Step 4: If a resolution cannot be reached by these internal mechanisms, or if these internal mechanisms are not appropriate, the student-athlete (or anyone involved in the particular grievance matter) should seek the assistance of the ACU Office of the Provost. If a resolution does not occur at this level, the ACU Office of the Provost will refer the matter to appropriate entities.

NOTE: Separate policies and procedures have been established to address situations in which a student-athlete wishes to appeal a decision by the athletics department to:

- Deny a student-athlete permission to use the one-time transfer exception
- Cancel, reduce, or non-renew a student-athlete's athletically related financial aid

Financial Aid & One-Time Transfer Appeals Policy

Appeals Policy

The University shall have a Student-Athlete Appeal Hearing Procedure as required by the NCAA Division I Manual (14.5.5.2.10.1; 15.3.2.3). These appeal procedures will be followed for student-athlete appeals regarding the reduction, cancellation, or non-renewal of athletically related financial aid or the denial of the one-time transfer exception.

A student-athlete can appeal a decision by completing the Student-Athlete Financial Aid/Transfer Appeal Form in ARMS within ten (10) business days of receiving notification regarding the reduction,

cancellation, or non-renewal of athletically related financial aid or the denial of the one-time transfer exception.

All appeal procedures will be applicable to the most current NCAA legislation at the time of the appeal. All appeal rulings will be determined by the Student-Athlete Appeal Hearing Committee.

Appeals Committee

The Student-Athlete Appeal Hearing Committee will be comprised of five (5) voting members who are faculty or staff from various university departments. The committee will always include the Faculty Athletic Representative (FAR) as a voting member. For financial aid appeals, a representative of the Student Financial Services office will serve as a voting member. Employees of the Department of Athletics are not eligible to be voting members on the committee but can serve in ex-officio roles as allowed by the NCAA manual.

The committee will serve to conduct both informal and formal hearings. Informal hearings are defined as two (2) committee members independently reviewing all submitted documentation related to the student-athlete appeal and then providing a ruling on the appeal. Formal hearings are defined as the full committee, five (5) voting members, reviewing all submitted documentation related to the student-athlete appeal and then voting on a ruling for the appeal. A representative from the committee will notify all required parties, in writing, of the final ruling.

General Appeal Procedures

The student-athlete will be notified in writing about the reduction, cancellation, or non-renewal of athletically related financial aid or the denial of the one-time transfer exception.

The student-athlete will have 10 business days from the date of notification to fill out the Student-Athlete Financial Aid/Transfer Appeal Form in ARMS and submit any additional documents that are applicable to the appeal. When submitting an appeal for the denial of the one-time transfer exception, the student-athlete will be given the option to elect to actively participate in the hearing.

Once the student-athlete has submitted his/her appeal and supporting documents, a coach and/or staff member from the Department of Athletics will be contacted to provide a statement and submit any additional documents that are applicable to the appeal. If additional documentation is needed to complete a review of the appeal, it will be requested in writing by a member of the committee.

Financial Aid Appeal Procedure

After submitting the appeal, an informal hearing will be conducted to determine if the reduction, cancellation, or non-renewal of athletically related financial aid is within the guidelines established by NCAA Bylaw 15.3. If the committee members conducting the informal hearing do not agree on a ruling, the appeal will then be reviewed in a formal hearing. The student-athlete will be notified in writing about the scheduled formal hearing and will have the option to actively participate if he/she elects to.

Upon the completion of all financial aid appeal hearings, the student-athlete, Department of Athletics, and Student Financial Services shall be notified in writing.

One-Time Transfer Exception Appeal Procedure

Should a student-athlete elect to actively participate in the hearing, only a formal hearing will be conducted. A student-athlete who elects to not actively participate will forfeit this right throughout the hearing process and will have their appeal reviewed in an informal hearing. If the committee members conducting the informal hearing do not agree upon a ruling, the appeal will then be reviewed in a formal hearing.

One-time transfer exception hearings will be conducted and written results shall be provided to the student-athlete and Department of Athletics within 15 days of the receipt of the student-athlete's appeal request.

Athletic Training Information and Regulations

General Overview

Medical coverage is provided to all student-athletes by full-time licensed athletic trainers, licensed graduate assistant athletic trainers and athletic training students. Medical care is coordinated through the athletic trainers in conjunction with local licensed physicians specializing in their respective field. As defined by the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA), Athletic Trainers are healthcare professionals who render service or treatment, under the direction of or in collaboration with a physician, in accordance with their education and training and the states' statutes, rules and regulations. As a part of the healthcare team, services provided by athletic trainers include injury and illness prevention, wellness promotion and education, emergent care, examination and clinical diagnosis, therapeutic intervention, and rehabilitation of injuries and medical conditions. ACU operates with multiple athletic training rooms and hours may vary depending on sport season and program needs. Please see your athletic trainer for special hours and treatment care.

Authority

A member of the medical staff has the unchallengeable authority to determine medical management and return-to-play decisions of student-athletes, including the authority to cancel or modify a practice or workout of an individual student-athlete or an entire team, for health and/or safety reasons, including inclement weather.

Notification of Injury

Each student-athlete is required to notify the athletic trainer assigned to his/her sport of any injury or illness that is directly related to athletic participation or injuries or illnesses that could affect athletic participation. All expenses incurred from physician appointments NOT coordinated with the medical staff will be paid for by the student-athlete. If a bill is incurred without the knowledge and/or permission of the medical staff, the athletic department will assume financial responsibility only if acceptable justification is provided.

Physicians

The athletics department retains several qualified physicians who are specialists in various medical conditions including sports injuries. Injured student-athletes will be examined and treated by the designated team physicians.

Pre-Participation Physical Examinations

Each student-athlete must complete a pre-participation physical examination with the medical staff and receive approval to participate by a team physician before he/she may participate in any practice/competition activity and/or check out equipment. The athletic trainers will assist in scheduling these appointments with the team physicians. The medical staff may re-examine any student-athlete and change their participation status at any time.

Exit Physical Examinations

Following the conclusion of their final intercollegiate season, each student-athlete must complete an exit physical examination by the medical staff. Any and all healthcare concerns should be discussed with the medical staff at that time. According with NCAA and ACU Athletics Policy, payment for follow-up medical examinations, treatment, and/or procedures will be provided by ACU Athletics according to the medical billing policy for up to (2) years following the end of eligibility.

Training Room Regulations

The Athletic Training Room will be open at 1:00 p.m. for treatments, practice preparation, and rehabilitation during the fall and spring semesters. The training room will also be open from 8-11 a.m. This time is to be used for consultations, evaluations and pre-arranged treatments.

All athletes who need treatment or taping should be present at the training room at the times indicated below. If you are not present at the appropriate time for your sport, we will assume you are able and ready to practice that day. (1 hour before practice for all sports except football; Football 1 1/2 hour before position meetings or at least 1 1/2 hour before practice.)

Following the end of regularly scheduled practice, there will be a 45-minute post practice treatment time. All athletes should be showered before attending these treatments.

Report every injury or blister, no matter how trivial it may seem to you. Do not treat yourself; wait until an Athletic Trainer can help you.

- Come to the training room dressed in shorts or appropriate attire for treatment or taping.
- Please remove all shoes before entering the training room.
- No athlete is to operate or help him or herself to any training room equipment.
- Do not remove supplies or equipment from the training room.
- Wait your turn! Everyone has somewhere to be, but we cannot help everyone at once.
- Do not come to the training room just to visit with your friends.
- You are responsible for all special equipment issued to you. If it is not returned, you will be held accountable for its replacement.
- DO NOT USE PROFANITY OR OFFENSIVE LANGUAGE IN THE TRAINING ROOM.
- No food or drink or tobacco product will be permitted in the training room.

Medical Insurance and Payment of Medical Bills

All student-athletes and practice players must provide proof of primary insurance coverage at the beginning of the academic school year and maintain insurance coverage for the entire time the student-athlete or practice player is participating in an intercollegiate sport at ACU. ACU Sports Medicine has worked through many different primary medical insurance companies, and through this process we have had to restrict the types and companies we allow student-athletes to use as primary insurance. The first restriction is regarding group medical share companies as a form of primary insurance. The companies have not been able to pay for medical bills as a primary insurance, and payments have been seriously delayed in processing. Therefore, ACU Athletics will no longer accept group medical share plans as primary insurance. Here is a list of some of the group medical share plans: Medi-Share; Samaritan Ministries; Christian Healthcare Ministries; Liberty Healthshare; Sedera. Secondly, we can no longer allow Kaiser Permanente insurance to act as primary medical insurance for ACU student-athletes.

The insurance plan used by the ACU Athletic Department is designed to be used as secondary insurance to each student-athlete's personal primary medical insurance coverage. This policy only covers those injuries incurred during participation in activities related to participation with the sport.

ACU will be the secondary carrier in all approved claims. If any portion is not covered by the student-athlete's personal insurance, then ACU will pay the balance. To assist the student-athlete in paying for medical expenses not related to intercollegiate athletics, the student-athlete should be encouraged to enroll in some form of personal health insurance program if his/her parents do not have a policy in effect. Contact your athletic trainer to assist with any questions you may have regarding this.

Primary Medical Insurance Coverage for Non-Scholarship Student-Athletes

Non-scholarship student-athletes and practice players must provide proof of primary insurance coverage at the beginning of the academic school year and maintain insurance coverage for the entire time the student-athlete or practice player is participating in an intercollegiate sport at ACU. This insurance policy must cover student-athletes or practice players for injuries sustained while participating in intercollegiate athletics. Insurance claims for injuries sustained while participating in an intercollegiate sports sponsored activity, such as a scheduled practice or competition, will be filed with the student-athletes or practice player's primary insurance carrier. ACU will act as a secondary insurance carrier, paying the amount due after the primary insurance carrier has processed all claims for said injury.

Once the primary insurance company responds to the claim with a denial or payment, you (or your parents) must forward to the sports medicine staff:

- A copy of all bills
- The insurance company's Explanation of Benefits (EOB), which details the amount of their payment for the claim. The athletic medicine staff then processes these bills for payment.
- Please forward all subsequent bills, and/or reminders of payment of outstanding bills, to your team's athletic trainer.

Questions or concerns regarding medical claims can be presented to the medical staff which includes the team's Athletic Trainer, Director of Sports Medicine, and/or Medical Claims Coordinator. Additionally, correspondence with the student-athlete and/or parent(s) of the student-athlete may occur from the medical staff regarding any concerns related to maintain an appropriate level of primary medical insurance and/or medical claims questions.

NCAA Catastrophic Insurance Program

The NCAA sponsors a Catastrophic Injury Insurance Program that covers the student-athlete who is catastrophically injured while participating in authorized, organized or sponsored NCAA events, including practice and competition. The student-athlete is eligible for up to \$ 20 million in lifetime benefits. The plans cover not only medical care but also disability payments, home modification and rehabilitation. It also features a death benefit. The policy has a \$90,000 deductible and provides benefits in excess of any other valid and collectible insurance. For more details, refer to NCAA web site at www.ncaa.org.

Coverage of Medically Related Expenses

Injuries/Illness during Sport Participation. ACU Athletics will pay those injuries and/or illness incurred while participating as an active student-athlete and according to the ACU Athletics medical billing process. It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to inform the ACU Athletics Medical Staff of any new injuries or illnesses as soon as possible. The student-athlete should not seek outside medical attention for athletic related injury or illness without the notification and approval from the medical staff UNLESS the injury or illness is a medical emergency. In emergent situations, it is recommended that the student-athlete attempt to notify the medical staff of the injury or illness as soon as reasonably possible.

Second Medical Opinion/Outside Referral Policy. After receiving an initial diagnosis by a physician retained by the athletic department, a student-athlete may request a second medical opinion from a physician of their choice, other than the one originally retained by athletic department. Second opinion visits to physicians, specialists or other services related to injury or illness care (chiropractic, massage therapy, physical therapy, etc.) will only be covered by ACU Athletics if approved by the ACU Athletics Medical Staff. Should a student-athlete choose medical services from providers other than those retained by ACU, the student-athlete and his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) will be solely responsible for any and all charges incurred if approved by the ACU Medical Staff prior to the outside consultation.

- Diagnostic Testing – Diagnostic testing (e.g. x-ray, CT, MRI) will only be covered by ACU if approved and arranged by the ACU Athletics Medical Staff.
- Pre-existing Medical Condition – ACU Athletics may not assume responsibility of pre-existing medical conditions. Treatment and medication for such conditions may only be covered as deemed appropriate by ACU Athletics Team Physicians
- Out of Season Injury –ACU Athletics may not assume responsibility for the care of injuries or illnesses incurred when the student-athlete is not actively engaged in a sanctioned sport activity (eg., practice, competition, sport training activity)
- End of Eligibility Coverage - ACU will pay for medical treatment after your athletics eligibility expires or after you are no longer a member of the team only if it is for follow-up treatment related to an earlier injury caused during athletics participation.

Prescription Medications and Dietary Supplements

Prescription medication must be prescribed a physician. Only over-the-counter medication may be distributed without the direction of a physician. The student-athletes must be advised prior to taking any medication to ensure that it does not cause a health concern or contain a substance banned by the NCAA or Southland Conference.

ADHD

If you have been diagnosed with ADD/ADHD and taking medication to treat it, ACU Athletic Department must gather information and have it on file **BEFORE** you take this medication. Many of these medications are on the NCAA and Southland Conference banned substance list and steps must be taken to allow you to use this medication without jeopardizing your eligibility. Please contact the staff athletic trainer for your sport for additional information and directions on how to best handle this matter.

Dietary supplements that are sold over the counter and through the internet may contain substances banned by the NCAA and Southland Conference. Please contact your athletic trainer prior to taking any dietary supplements to verify the contents.

ACU Concussion Management Guidelines

- A. ACU requires student-athletes to sign a statement in which student-athletes accept the responsibility for reporting their injuries and illnesses to the sports medicine staff, including signs and symptoms of concussions. During the review and signing process, student-athletes will be provided with educational material on concussions.
- B. ACU will have on file and annually update an emergency action plan for each athletics venue to respond to student-athletes' catastrophic injuries and illnesses, including but not limited to concussions, heat illness, spine injury, cardiac arrest, respiratory distress (e.g. asthma), and sickle cell trait collapses. All athletics healthcare providers and coaches shall review and practice the plan annually. These sessions will be conducted prior to the start of the sport season. Concussion training will occur annually through a portal from the risk management department through the university
- C. ACU sports medicine staff members shall be empowered to determine management and return-to-play of any ill or injured student-athlete, as he or she deems appropriate. Conflicts or concerns will be forwarded to Cory Driskill (Associate AD for Sports Performance) and Chad Ezzell, MD (Head Team Physician) for remediation.
- D. ACU shall have on file a written team physician-directed concussion management plan that specifically outlines the roles of athletics healthcare staff (e.g., physician, certified athletic trainer, physician assistant). ACU annually reviews concussion management protocols with the guidelines outlined by the NCAA. In addition, the following components have been specifically identified for the collegiate environment:
 - ACU coaches will receive a copy of the concussion management plan and a fact sheet on concussions in sport. The ACU compliance office will maintain a list of staff that has completed the requirement on file.
 - ACU sports medicine staff members and other athletics healthcare providers will practice within the standards as established for their professional practice (e.g., team physician, certified athletic trainer, physician assistant).
 - ACU shall record a baseline assessment using the Impact test for each student-athlete in the sports of baseball, basketball, football, pole vaulting, soccer, softball, and volleyball at a minimum. In addition, a baseline assessment will be recorded for student-athletes with a known history of concussion. The same baseline assessment tools should be used post-injury at appropriate time intervals. The baseline assessment should consist of the use of: 1) symptoms checklist, 2) standardized balance assessment (BESS) and 3) neuropsychological testing (computerized IMPACT test). Neuropsychological testing has been shown to be effective in the evaluation and management of concussion and has proven to be an effective tool in assessing neurocognitive changes following concussion and can serve as an important component of an institution's concussion management plan. However, neuropsychological tests should not be used as a standalone measure to diagnose the presence or absence of a concussion as ACU uses a multi-faceted assessment by its sports medicine staff to make these decisions.

- When a student-athlete shows any signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion, the athlete will be removed from practice or competition, by either a member of the coaching staff or sports medicine staff. If removed by a coaching staff member, the coach will refer the student-athlete for evaluation by a member of the sports medicine staff. During competitions, on-the-field-of-play injuries will be under the purview of the official and playing rules of the sport. ACU staff will follow such rules and attend to medical situations as they arise. Visiting sport team members evaluated by ACU sports medicine staff will be managed in the same manner as ACU student-athletes.
 - A student-athlete diagnosed with a concussion will be withheld from the competition or practice and not return to activity for the remainder of that day. Student-athletes that sustain a concussion outside of their sport will be managed in the same manner as those sustained during sport activity.
 - The student-athlete will receive serial monitoring for deterioration. Athletes will be provided with written home instructions upon discharge; preferably with a roommate, guardian, or someone that can follow the instructions.
 - The student-athlete will be monitored for recurrence of symptoms both from physical exertion and also mental exertion, such as reading, phone texting, computer games, watching film, athletic meetings, working on a computer, classroom work, or taking a test. Academic advisors and professors will be notified of student-athlete's concussion, with permission for release of information from the student-athlete.
 - The student-athlete will be evaluated by a team physician as outlined within the concussion management plan. Once asymptomatic and post-exertion assessments are within normal baseline limits, return to play shall follow a medically supervised stepwise process.
 - Final authority for Return-to-Play shall reside with the team physician or the physician's designee as noted in the concussion management flowchart.
- E. ACU will document the incident, evaluation, continued management, and clearance of the student-athlete with a concussion.
- F. Athletics staff, student-athletes and officials will continue to emphasize that purposeful or flagrant head or neck contact in any sport should not be permitted.

For more information on ACU's concussion policy, please contact Cory Driskill.

ACU Mental Health Management

Emergency mental health related incidents may arise at any time. Expedient action must be taken in order to provide the best possible care to the student-athlete(s) involved. The development and implementation of an emergency action plan will help ensure that the best care will be provided. This preparation involves formulation of an emergency plan, utilization of appropriate emergency medical personnel, and continuing education in the area of mental health emergency responding. Hopefully, through careful pre-participation physical and mental health screenings, adequate medical coverage, proactive education and interventions, and active referrals of student-athletes with mental health issues, some potential emergencies may be avoided. However, proper preparation on the part of the sports medicine team should enable each mental health issue, regardless of severity, to be treated and managed appropriately with all the appropriate parties informed and working together. Our goal is to manage these situations with compassion, effective communication and as much privacy and confidentiality as the situation allows (Compassion, Communication & Confidentiality).

Components of the Mental Health Emergency Action Plan

Part 1: Involved Personnel

Part 2: Mental Health Screening

Part 3: Mental Health Referrals

Part 4: Mental Health Crisis & the Mental Health Incident Management Team

Mental health screening (Part 2) outlines the protocol for the athletic department's proactive approach for early identification and treatment of mental health issues. Mental health referrals (Part 3) outlines the protocol for the ongoing process of identification and referrals. The final part of this document (Part 4),

outlines the protocol for action regarding Mental Health Crisis & the Mental Health Incident Management Team.

Emergency Communication

Communication is the key to quick emergency response. Athletic trainers and emergency medical personnel must work together to provide the best emergency response capability and should have contact information established as a part of pre-planning for emergency situations. Communication prior to the event is a good way to establish boundaries and to build rapport between both groups of professionals. Program appropriate numbers into your phone, have your cell phone on you and prepared should a mental health emergency arise.

For more information on ACU's Mental Health Management & Emergency Action Plan, please contact Cory Driskill.

ACU Student-Athlete Drug Policy

The Abilene Christian University ("University") Department of Athletics requires that each student-athlete (hereinafter defined) comply with the NCAA and University policies regarding substance use/abuse. The Department of Athletics is concerned with the health, safety and welfare of its student-athletes. Substance use/abuse is one of the most important issues facing athletics and society today. The use of illegal drugs, misuse of legal drugs and dietary supplements, use of performance-enhancing substances, are inconsistent with the standards expected of student-athletes at Abilene Christian University. Substance use/abuse in sport can pose risks to the student-athlete's health and negatively affect his/her academic and athletic performance. Additionally, substance use/abuse can compromise the integrity of athletic competition and the ideals of Abilene Christian University. This Abilene Christian University Department of Athletics Student-Athlete Drug and Alcohol Policy ("Policy") was developed to ensure the safety and quality of athletics at the University. The University Director of Sports Medicine and/or his designee shall coordinate this Policy.

This Policy represents the Abilene Christian University policy on substance use/abuse and testing. Each student-athlete is also subject to the NCAA testing programs, which are separate and distinct from this Policy. Sanctions imposed for violations of the NCAA testing programs are also separate and distinct from this Policy, and it is the responsibility of the student-athlete to ensure they are in compliance with all such policies. Attached to this Policy is Abilene Christian University Student-Athlete Acknowledgement of Drug-Testing Sanctions Consent, which details the sanctions relative to the separate programs. PLEASE NOTE, the NCAA SANCTIONS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT ANY TIME WITHOUT NOTICE. Additional information regarding the NCAA substance abuse programs and policies may be found on their respective websites.

This Policy does not represent a contract between the student-athlete and the University, and is subject to change at any time without notice to the student-athlete. For the purposes of this Policy, "student-athlete" shall mean any University student who participates in any Abilene Christian University Department of Athletics sanctioned NCAA sporting event and/or practice.

Drug and Alcohol Education

Student-athletes will be provided with information regarding the use of illegal substances, misuse of alcohol and the dangers of using reputedly performance-enhancing substances such as anabolic steroids and nutritional supplements. The education program will draw upon the specialized skill of University personnel as well as resources outside the University to inform student-athletes concerning the physical and psychological consequences of drug use and abuse.

The Abilene Christian University Drug and Alcohol Policy and administration procedures will be provided to each student-athlete at pre-season annual team meetings or within their dedicated pre-season paperwork.

The Associate AD of Sports Performance, along with the Sports Medicine staff, will provide an educational session to all athletic teams regarding the Policy. Included in such sessions are discussions on nutritional supplements and their risks. The drug and alcohol educational sessions will be presented based on a team's practice and competition schedule. Each student-athlete shall be required to attend at least one educational session during the academic year.

A University Drug Testing Informed Consent form stating that the student-athlete has read this Policy and program statement, and has agreed to participate in the program will be required of each student-athlete prior to participation in any athletic program. Participation in Abilene Christian University athletics is a privilege and no student-athlete will be permitted to participate in any athletic program until he/she has executed and returned the following documents to the Director of Sports Medicine or his designee:

Student-athletes are encouraged to utilize campus counseling services and are made aware of health and safety, alcohol and other drug guidelines by the Sports Medicine staff, coaches, and the Compliance Services Department. Student-athletes are encouraged to utilize resources provided by the Sports Medicine staff and Compliance staff during pre-participation physicals and a series of educational sessions provided each semester. Coaches are also educated by the Sports Medicine staff in their ability to play an important role in identification and appropriate referral of student-athletes with health and safety concerns.

Screening for Use of Illicit Drugs

All student-athletes will be subject to random testing throughout the academic year and summer. Additionally, any student-athlete may be required to be tested if a member of the athletic staff, having an opportunity to observe the student-athlete's behavior, physical condition or performance, concludes that there is reasonable cause to suspect drug usage.

All student-athletes in post-season competition may be tested for drug usage before competition. Additionally, the University reserves the right to team test any time and will require all student-athletes who have tested positive to be re-tested prior to a return from a participation suspension. By signing the Drug Testing Informed Consent, the student-athlete agrees that any test result may be released to the Director of Athletics, Associate Athletic Director for Compliance, Director of Compliance, Senior Woman Administrator(SWA), and the Director of Sports Medicine and/or his designee, and/or the student-athlete's head coach.

Testing Notification and Drug Testing

Upon selection for testing, student-athletes will be notified by direct phone contact or face to face prior to testing by the University Director of Athletics or his/her designee, the student-athlete's coach, Sports Medicine Staff, or a member of the University athletics administration. Notification will take place no more than 48 hours before the scheduled test. Upon notification, the student-athlete will be asked to read and sign an Abilene Christian University Drug Policy Notification Form notifying him/her of the date, time, and site of the testing as well as any other special instructions pertinent to the test. The student-athlete will be instructed to report to the test site with a picture ID. If a student-athlete does not report at the scheduled time for his/her test, he/she will be sanctioned appropriately for his/her action. A "no show" will be interpreted as a positive test result and the student-athlete may be subject to penalties and sanctions at the discretion of the Director of Athletics. The student athlete will also be able, at the time of the test, to produce a viable sample for collection. If student cannot produce an adequate sample this could be interpreted as a positive test and will be subject to additional testing and possibly further procedures. This is to be determined on a case by case basis. If the student athlete provides a dilute sample upon reporting to the test, he/she will have no more than three attempts to provide a sample that is viable to test.

The drug screening process may include analysis of, but is not limited to, the NCAA Banned Drug List (Appendix 1). For an ongoing updated listing of the NCAA Banned-Drug Classes List view the NCAA's web site at www.ncaa.org. Please note, the University reserves the right to test for substances not listed on the NCAA list of banned substances and may test at lower cut-off levels than the NCAA testing program. The Abilene Christian University Athletic Department requires that all student-athletes keep the

athletic training staff and/or the Director of Sports Medicine aware of any prescribed drugs and nutritional supplements that he/she may be taking.

Notification of Results. An off-campus contracted provider will communicate the results of the tests to the Associate AD for Sports Performance and/or his designee. If a drug test is positive, the Associate AD for Sports Performance and/or his designee will then notify the student-athlete and any other party as described in this Policy of such result. All results will be kept confidential.

Self-Referral. Any student-athlete may refer himself/herself for evaluation or counseling by contacting a member of the coaching staff, University Sports Medicine Department, or an Athletics Department administrator and enter into the *Safe Harbor Program*. *At the beginning of each sports competition season, the Associate AD for Sports Performance will conduct a meeting with each sport and distribute information regarding the safe harbor program to each SA.* This self-referral will be held strictly confidential and no University administrative sanctions will be imposed upon the student-athlete who has made a personal decision to seek professional assistance. A treatment plan will be put into place and the student-athlete will not be sanctioned for entry. A student-athlete testing positive after entering this program will be subject to the applicable sanctions. A student athlete will not qualify for this program if they report after being notified that they are subject to a drug test or 12 hours prior to drug testing notification.

Implications of Test Results for Abilene Christian University Drug Testing

Any student-athlete testing positive for an anabolic agent and/or a performance enhancing substance or any substance used to mask the use of the previous mentioned will be immediately suspended from competition and practice for the period of one year. Additionally, the Director of Athletics and/or his/her designee may suspend or permanently dismiss any student-athlete that tests positive for a drug or abuses alcohol that is determined to be detrimental to the health and safety of the student-athlete, other student-athletes, or athletic department personnel, on a case by case basis.

The Head Coach may have team policy regarding substance abuse that affect a student-athlete's eligibility for practice or competition. Such team policies may be more stringent, but cannot be more lenient than outlined in the policy.

The Student Athlete drug and alcohol policy sanctions will remain in effect for the entirety of the Student Athlete's eligibility at ACU. Under no circumstances do the sanctions reset while the athlete is eligible at ACU.

Test Result	Sanction
First Positive	Notification of results, Mandatory confidential meeting(s) with designated counselor, Notification of results to parents/legal guardians.
Second Positive	Notification of results, Mandatory confidential meeting(s) with designated counselor, Notification of results to parents/legal guardians, Immediate suspension for next 10% of a team's regular-scheduled competitions.
Third Positive	Upon notification of results immediate and permanent suspension with loss of financial aid

First Positive Test

Notification of the results will be made to the designated University counselor, the student-athlete, the Associate AD of Sports Performance and/or his designee, the Director of Athletics, Director for Compliance, SWA, the appropriate sport administrator, the appropriate head coach, and the immediate supervisor for Sports Medicine. The student-athlete will be notified by the Director of Athletics or appropriate sport administrator or the head coach as to terms of action. The student-athlete will be required to have a confidential meeting(s) with the designated drug treatment and rehabilitation counselor. Appropriate counseling and/or treatment will be determined and provided by the counselor.

Student Athlete will be automatically placed on the next institutional drug test until he/she test negative. Once again, the student-athlete must call his/her parents/legal guardians as indicated above.

Any student-athlete who has a result of positive will be required to:

- A. Call his/her parents/legal guardian in the presence of the head coach, position coach, or the athletic trainer to notify them of the test result.
- B. Head Coach or Athletic Trainer will be responsible for setting up mandatory counseling session with designated drug counselor at ACU Medical and Counseling Care Center.
- C. Head coach/Athletic Trainer will keep records of athlete attendance to counseling sessions and report to the Director of Sports Medicine.

If Student Athlete fails to attend any mandatory counseling sessions, barring extenuating circumstances, (i.e. death in the family, car accident, etc.) sanctions under the second positive test may be administered by the, Associate AD for Sports Performance, director of compliance and director of athletics.

Second Positive Test

Notification of the results will be made to the designated University counselor, the student-athlete, the Associate AD for Sports Performance, and/or his designee, the Director of Athletics, Associate Athletic Director for Compliance, Director for Compliance, SWA, the appropriate sport administrator, the appropriate head coach, and the immediate supervisor for Sports Medicine. The student-athlete will be notified by the Director of Athletics or appropriate sport administrator or the head coach as to terms of action. The Head Coach can notify the student athlete of an immediate suspension from the next 10% of a team's scheduled competition. The student-athlete will be required to have a confidential meeting(s) with the designated drug treatment and rehabilitation counselor. Appropriate counseling and/or treatment will be determined and provided by the counselor. Also, the student-athlete will be required to provide a negative sample during his/her suspension in order to return to participation. Once again, the student-athlete must call his/her parents/legal guardians as indicated above.

Third Positive Test

Notification of the results will be made to the designated University counselor, the student-athlete, the Associate AD for Sports Performance and/or his designee, the Director of Athletics, Associate Athletic Director for Compliance, Director for Compliance, SWA, the appropriate sport administrator, the team physician, the appropriate head coach, and the immediate supervisor of Sports Medicine as outlined above. The student-athlete will be notified in writing that he/she will be immediately and permanently suspended from all athletics participation with loss of financial aid.

Appeal

Within 24 hours of receipt of notification the student-athlete may request in writing that the Director of Athletics convene a meeting with the Associate AD for Sports Performance, Director for Compliance, the appropriate sport administrator, appropriate head coach, and the immediate supervisor of Sports Medicine to present reasons why the sanction should not be imposed or should be modified. At the conclusion of the meeting, unless the Director of Athletics determines otherwise, the period of suspension will begin immediately.

Within three (3) days of receipt of the notification of any pending sanction from the Director of Athletics, the student-athlete may appeal the sanction to a committee comprised of the Chair and four other members of the General Scholarship and Financial Aid Committee.

Within seven (7) days of receipt of the written request for an appeal, the Chair of the General Scholarship and Financial Aid Committee will convene a hearing at which time the student-athlete will have an opportunity to be heard and present evidence concerning the reported test results and the impending sanction. The student athlete may request to have the "B" sample tested at the same laboratory that tested the "A" sample. The student-athlete may be accompanied at the hearing by an attorney and/or other person of his or her choice who may act as an advisor. The student athlete's representatives may confer jointly, but will not be permitted to address the Committee.

The Chair of the General Scholarship and Financial Aid Committee will give written notification to the student-athlete and the Director of Athletics of the decision of the Committee. The Committee's decision will be final.

NOTICE: These sanctions are those of ACU Athletics and are not associated with the sanctions given as the result of NCAA testing.

NCAA Drug Testing Program Protocol

Drug screening will be administered pursuant to the guidelines set forth in the NCAA Drug Testing Program. Drug testing legislation can be found in the Division I manual and on the NCAA Web Page at www.ncaa.org. Prior to participation, each student-athlete will be required to sign a NCAA Drug Testing Consent Form which will be administered by the Compliance staff.

Per NCAA rules, any positive:

1. If tested before competition, will result in the student-athlete being disqualified from competition and the loss of one (1) year of eligibility.
2. If tested during or after competition, will result in a team penalty (which may include disqualification from and/or forfeiture of competition), and the loss of one (1) year of eligibility for the student-athlete.

IOC/USOC and USADA Drug Testing Guidelines

1. Please be advised that all student-athletes involved in competition sanctioned by some other National Governing Body (NGB) must acknowledge that:
2. Medication prescribed by your physician, and approved for use by the NCAA, may contain substances prohibited by your sanctioned NGB.
3. Over-the-counter medications may contain substances prohibited by your sanctioned NGB.
4. Vitamin, herbal, and nutritional supplements purchased over-the-counter or via the internet may contain substances prohibited by your sanctioned NGB.

Always check with the Associate AD for Sports Performance and/or his/her designee prior to using any supplement or medication. Student-athletes should not take any medications or supplements unless it is approved by their respective athletic trainer. However, there is no guarantee that a supplement approved by an athletic trainer or Team Physician does NOT contain a contaminant or unlisted prohibited substance that could create a positive drug test.

NCAA policy states that any prohibited substance discovered on a drug test is the responsibility of the student-athlete. If the substance is determined to have come from a contaminated supplement, penalties will still apply to that student-athlete. Therefore, all student-athletes are cautioned against ingesting any supplements other than those approved by the athletics department.