

HCU Student-Athlete Handbook 2024-2025



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Please Note: "Student-athlete" or "SA" refers to all HCU undergraduate and graduate students participating in the athletic program, including those who have exhausted eligibility or who are medically incapable of competing.



HOUSTON CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Dear HCU student-athlete,

It's an exciting time to be an HCU Husky! HCU has an outstanding tradition of academic and athletic excellence, and it is truly a pleasure to welcome your participation in the HCU Intercollegiate Athletic program. We are all blessed to be part of a wonderful Christian institution like HCU, and we want you to make the most of your time here.

Being a student at a selective and highly competitive institution like ours is distinctive, but being a student-athlete is a special privilege. We are proud to have student-athletes of your caliber represent us in NCAA competition, and we hope you are proud to represent HCU. The environment that we find ourselves in here at HCU promotes and demands excellence and integrity from us all. College years are finite, but you have the opportunity as a student-athlete to make an impact that will last forever. As a student-athlete you are challenged to excel in the classroom and on the field of competition. In both roles you will represent your family, your coaches, your teammates and our university. You are the best and brightest that HCU has to offer and will be a role model to many. The opportunities that await you are tremendous, but so are the responsibilities.

We offer our student-athlete handbook as a resource to better understand the commitments, obligations and rewards associated with your affiliation as an HCU student-athlete. We as an athletic staff are proud of you and want you to feel that same sense of pride. We will provide leadership and resources, but you must provide the heart and dedication.

This handbook, designed by athletic department staff members, attempts to answer your questions about the academic and athletic policies and procedures that govern our department. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to call or visit with the appropriate person in our department. We stand ready to assist you.

Best wishes in all of your endeavors, and DAWGS UP!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Moniaci', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Steve Moniaci
Director of Athletics

I. STATEMENT OF VISION, MISSION AND PURPOSE

University Vision

The mission of Houston Christian University is to provide a learning experience that instills in students a passion for academic, spiritual and professional excellence as a result of our central confession, “Jesus Christ is Lord.”

As envisioned by its founders and constituents, HCU is growing into a national metropolitan university that emphasizes the integration of faith and learning and a strong liberal arts foundation. HCU’s new vision document, *The Ten Pillars: Faith and Reason in a Great City*, may be found on the University’s website at <https://hc.edu/about-hcu/ten-pillars/>.

Houston Christian University Mission Statement

The mission of Houston Christian University is to provide a learning experience that instills in students a passion for academic, spiritual, and professional excellence as a result of our central confession, “Jesus Christ is Lord”.

Purpose

The University welcomes and extends its resources to those who strive for academic excellence. The faculty, staff, and administration are committed to providing a responsive and intellectually stimulating environment that:

- fosters spiritual maturity, strength of character, and moral virtues as the foundation for successful living;
- develops professional behaviors and personal characteristics for life-long learning and service to God and to the community;
- meets the changing needs of the community and society; and
- remains faithful to the “Nature of the Institution” statement, which is the Preamble to the By-Laws.

The University offers a broad range of programs and services committed to liberal arts education that are designed to promote the growth of the whole person. The undergraduate programs familiarize students with the principal bodies of knowledge, cultural viewpoints, belief systems, and aesthetic perspectives that affect them and their world. The graduate programs provide advanced educational opportunities to develop ethical and capable scholars and practitioners who can contribute to their academic disciplines and to society. The integration of scholarship, service, and spirituality essential to liberal arts education is nurtured in an environment of open inquiry.

The University enrolls men and women of diverse talents and abilities. Students are encouraged to think critically, to assess information from a Christian perspective, to arrive at informed and reasoned conclusions, and to become lifelong learners. The University prepares its graduates to enter the work force of the twenty-first century, to pursue advanced study, to assume leadership roles, and to be competitive in a global society.

The University faculty, staff and administrators promote learning, scholarship, creative endeavor, and service. These leaders are committed to the Preamble to the By-laws and to the fulfillment of the vision and mission of the University.

Nature of the Institution

The Preamble to the University By-Laws as stated below describes the distinctive nature of the institution.

The Houston Christian University is a Christian liberal arts university dedicated to the development of moral character, the enrichment of spiritual lives, and the perpetuation of growth in Christian ideals. Founded under the providence of God and with the conviction that there is a need for a university in this community that will train the minds, develop the moral character and enrich the spiritual lives of all people who may come within the ambit of its influence, **HOUSTON CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY** shall stand as a witness for Jesus Christ expressed directly through its administration, faculty and students. To assure the perpetuation of these basic concepts of its founders, it is resolved that all those who become associated with Houston Christian University as a trustee, officer, member of the faculty or of the staff, and who perform work connected with the educational activities of the University, must believe in the divine inspiration of the Bible, both the Old Testament and New Testament, that man was directly created by God, the virgin birth of Jesus

Christ, our Lord and Savior, as the Son of God, that He died for the sins of all men and thereafter arose from the grave, that by repentance and the acceptance of and belief in Him, by the grace of God, the individual is saved from eternal damnation and receives eternal life in the presence of God; and it is further resolved that the ultimate teachings in this University shall never be inconsistent with the above principles.

HCU Athletic Department Mission Statement

We are committed to providing a positive identity and culture for the University through the Christ-centered development of student-athletes and teams.

Non-Discrimination Policy

HCU complies with all applicable federal and state nondiscrimination laws and does not engage in prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, color, nationality or ethnic origin, gender, age, or disability in employment or the provision of services. However, the University does discriminate in employment on the basis of religion. The University is controlled by a Board of Trustees and is operated within the Christian-oriented aims and ideals. HCU is also affiliated with the Christian General Convention of Texas, a cooperative association of autonomous Texas Christian churches. As a religiously controlled institution of higher education, HCU is exempted from compliance with some provision of certain civil right laws, including some provision of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. HCU's non-discriminatory policy can be found at: <https://hc.edu/university-policies/student-non-discriminatory-policy/>.

Diversity Statement

HCU's Department of Athletics is committed to recruiting and educating the very best student-athletes it can. It is committed to providing an educational environment, and a work environment for its coaches and athletics staff, that provides equal opportunity and is free from any discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion of the student, age, or marital status. The department will make every effort to provide student-athletes, coaches and athletics staff with all possible information on programs, events, discussions and resources related to diversity, equal opportunity and respect for inclusiveness. It is this belief that such efforts will lead all student-athletes, coaches, and athletics staff to grow spiritually, feel welcome on campus, and be able to learn from and help educate others of any number of backgrounds and perspectives, which in turn will lead to a better academic and athletic experience for all.

II. STUDENT-ATHLETE CORE GUARANTEEES

The NCAA is putting in place new core guarantees for college athletes. Formerly known as the student-athlete holistic model, [these core guarantees](#) will enhance student-athlete benefits and services, expand scholarship protections and enhance expectations of Division I schools. The core guarantees cover student-athletes at Division I schools, plus student-athletes at a Division II or III school participating in a Division I sport. The core guarantees became effective Aug. 1, 2024.

These core guarantees require schools to provide student-athletes academic services and career counseling. Schools also must provide life skills training and education in at least nine specified areas:

- **Mental Health** – Mental health policies are covered each academic year at the sport specific compliance certification meetings. These policies can also be found in Section XXX on p. 56 of the Student-Athlete Handbook.
- **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging** – HCU Athletics' "Stand as One" Statement is included in Section XXXIV on p. 67 of the Student-Athlete Handbook. Additionally, the athletic department hosts annual events to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month and Black History Month. Additionally, HCU Athletics makes it a point to celebrate each foreign athlete's heritage through the playing of that athlete's national anthem prior to a selected home game of that athlete's sport.
- **Sexual Violence Prevention** – Sexual violence prevention policies are touched on each academic year at the sport specific compliance certification meetings. Each individual team will then proceed to have a separate meeting on the topic.
- **Transfer Requirements** – Transfer requirements are discussed each academic year at the sport specific compliance certification meetings. These requirements can also be found in Section XVI on p. 27 of the Student-Athlete Handbook.

- **Strength & Conditioning** - Each sports respective strength coach will conduct a meeting with the team prior to the start of the season regarding technique, safety, and goals for the year.
- **Nutrition** – Our HCU Athletic nutritionist will conduct a meeting with each team annually to discuss nutrition and offering their services to coach and student-athletes to help design menus and develop nutritional goals.
- **Financial Literacy** - HCU Athletics conducts an online financial literacy class that is sent out to student-athletes annually. This may also be supplemented with a financial literacy seminar with a local financial establishment.
- **Career preparation** – Career and Calling provides assistance for students and alumni in exploring one’s life calling through personal discovery, vocational exploration, and educational training. Each team will meet with Career and Calling within the first couple months of each school year to discuss what HCU offers in career preparation.
- **Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) Opportunities** – Each year INFLCR will hold a seminar for student-athletes to discuss how to achieve NIL agreements. NIL is also covered in section XX (p. 32) of the Student-Athlete Handbook.

Student-Athlete Health Care and Medical Services

These core guarantees expand the standard of care beyond the autonomy schools to all of Division I. They require schools to cover medical costs for an athletically related injury for at least two years after either graduation or separation from the school, or until the student-athlete qualifies for coverage under the NCAA Catastrophic Injury Insurance Program, whichever occurs first. They also include out-of-pocket medical expenses, such as coinsurance, copayments, deductibles and other medical expenses not reimbursed by insurance. The NCAA also sponsors the Post-Eligibility Insurance Program for student-athletes in all three divisions. This is considered “excess coverage” from what Division I schools are required to provide and does not replace a school’s obligation to provide medical care. Division I schools will need to attest to being in compliance with consensus-based guidance on providing health, safety and performance support as identified by the NCAA Board of Governors, such as Cardiac Care Best Practices, Mental Health Best Practices and the Concussion Safety Protocol Checklist.

Any new athletics aid agreements must meet new requirements designed to mirror existing protections already provided to most scholarship student-athletes attending autonomy schools. Schools cannot reduce, cancel or fail to renew athletics aid for athletics reasons, such as:

- Injury
- Physical or Mental Illness
- Athletic Ability or Performance
- Contribution to Team Success
- Roster Management Decisions

These core guarantees expand the eligibility for degree completion funding to any former student-athlete who received a scholarship in a head-count sport (football, basketball, women’s gymnastics, women’s volleyball and women’s tennis – all scholarships in these sports are full rides) or who received financial aid that resulted in the value of full tuition and fees, living expenses and required course-related books while at the school.

III. NCAA SPORTSMANSHIP AND ETHICAL CONDUCT STATEMENT

For intercollegiate athletics to promote the character development of participants, to enhance the integrity of higher education and to promote civility in society, student-athletes, coaches, and all others associated with these athletics programs and events should adhere to such fundamental values as respect, fairness, civility, honesty and responsibility. These values should be manifest not only in athletics participation, but also in the broad spectrum of activities affecting the athletics program.

IV. HCU ATHLETICS OPEN-DOOR POLICY FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES

It is the policy and desire of all athletic administrators within the HCU Athletic Department to maintain an “open-door” to student-athletes. This means that the athletic administrators encourage feedback from all student-athletes about rules and policies that apply

to them as members of HCU, the Southland Conference, the Ohio Valley Conference and the NCAA. All student-athletes are encouraged to take the time to review and comment on any policy or policies which they might have questions about or may not understand. Student-athletes are also encouraged to visit with their team Student-Athlete Advising Committee (SAAC) liaison as another way to bring forth any questions or issues. SAAC liaisons are then asked to present these issues at the next SAAC meeting.

V. HOUSTON CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY STUDENT-ATHLETE CONDUCT RESOLUTION

Whereas, intercollegiate athletic teams have for many years been associated with the host university and served to espouse the purpose and mission of this university.

Whereas, host institutions which have made the decision to foster and encourage the student-athlete experience as one option of leadership training and educational experience for their students, have affirmed the values which can accrue to the individual student-athletes and benefit the varied communities of the host institution.

Whereas, loyalty to alma mater, persistence to graduation, and more concerned involvement with the welfare of the university and community at large are documented advantages and benefits for universities in making the decision to encourage and support intercollegiate athletics.

Whereas, the administration, faculty, community, alumni and student-athletes seek shared partnership in the perpetuation of excellence in intercollegiate athletics.

Now, therefore be it resolved that the following obligations and statements be recognized as a guide, a vision, a prospectus for the successful relationship of men's and women's intercollegiate athletics with HCU.

A. A STATEMENT OF BASIC EXPECTATIONS

I will know and understand the ideals expressed in the HCU Student-Athlete Handbook and will strive to incorporate them in daily life.

I will strive for academic achievement and practice academic integrity.

I will respect the dignity of all persons; therefore, I will not physically, mentally, psychologically, or sexually abuse any human being through my actions, words, or deeds.

I will respect my property and the property of others; therefore, I will neither abuse nor tolerate the abuse of property.

I will meet my financial obligations in a timely manner.

I will neither use, manufacture, sell nor support the use of illegal drugs; I will neither abuse nor support the abuse of alcohol.

I will challenge all HCU student-athletes to abide by these expectations.

B. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF HCU STUDENT-ATHLETES

From the moment I commit myself to become a member of an intercollegiate athletic team at HCU; I am entitled to certain rights:

Right to be an **INDIVIDUAL**, accept as I am with personal qualities, which mark me as both similar and different from others.

Right to **DIGNITY**, free from intentional humiliation.

Right to **FAIRNESS**, to be treated fairly as any other student-athlete.

Right to **PRIVACY**, recognizing my need for personal time and the expectation that the security of my personal belongings will be respected.

Right to **RESPECT**, for my culture and my spiritual beliefs.

Right to **SUPPORT**, in my quest for personal growth, my studies, my social life, and spiritual development.

At the same time that I acquire these rights, I also accept certain responsibilities:

Responsibility for **GROWTH**, to work diligently for the development of myself, my college, and my team.

Responsibility for **LOYALTY**, to my team and its members, to the HCU Athletic Department, to my University and the ideals for which they stand.

Responsibility for **RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT**, since my personal actions reflect not only on me, but on my team and coaches, on the entire HCU Athletic program, on the University, and on my family and friends.

Responsibility for **RESPECT**, the rights, convictions and privacy of others, and to work unceasingly to improve relations with all other HCU student-athletes, students and faculty, with the University, and with the general public.

**Modified with permission of Virginia Tech University*

All HCU students are bound by the **HCU Student Code of Conduct distributed by the Office of Student Life**, including but not limited to the University's Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment policies and procedures contained therein. The HCU Sexual Assault Policy can be found at <https://hc.edu/university-policies/campus-policies/sexual-assault-policy/> and the Sexual Harassment policy can be found at <https://hc.edu/university-policies/campus-policies/sexual-harassment-policy/>.

All student-athletes including those who have exhausted eligibility or are medically incapable of competing are bound by the conduct resolution stated above and the rules set forth in this HCU Student-Athlete Handbook.

V. STUDENT-ATHLETES

A. GENERAL ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Standards for admission to academic programs and retention of student status shall apply equally to all persons whether athletes or non-athletes.

Student-athletes should familiarize themselves with the NCAA academic rules as well as the academic regulations of the university. In order to be knowledgeable concerning the requirements for their particular degrees, they should also be familiar with the academic regulations for the departments in which they take courses.

All students, including student-athletes, are expected to attend the classes in which they are enrolled, turn in all class assignments, and take all course examinations. **It is the duty of the student to take the initiative in arranging with the instructors to make-up missed assignments.** Rules regarding make-up exams will apply to student-athletes in the same manner as they apply to all students.

The standings of all student-athletes with respect to academic performance at HCU will be checked by HCU administrators regularly during and at the end of each semester. All student-athletes and non-athletes who are academically deficient as defined by the rules of HCU are placed on probation or suspension in accordance with the applicable university regulations listed in the HCU catalog.

B. TRANSFER AND SUMMER HOUR CREDIT

For credit to be allowed for any courses completed at other colleges and universities, and to determine the athletic eligibility of a student-athlete enrolled at HCU, prior approval of the acceptability of these courses must be obtained in writing from the Admissions Office's Transfer Specialist for transfer students, and the Office of Academic Records for current student-athletes.

C. ATHLETICS GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Any student-athlete with an issue regarding his or her team, coach, or teammate should follow these steps:

1. Speak first with the head coach involved. Every effort should be made to work out any grievances at this level.
2. If unsuccessful, seek out the athletic administrator who is over your sport. Be sure you have tried to resolve the problem with your coach because the first question asked of the athlete is whether the problem has been brought to the attention of the head coach. It is hoped that all matters can be resolved "in-house" within your own team; however, should problems still exist, contact the Director of Athletics or Faculty Athletics Representative.
3. Other avenues are available to the student-athlete to air various types of problems within their sport or within the department:
 - Exit interviews are conducted by a chosen faculty member. Any graduating senior can request an interview. The athletics department may also ask departing student-athletes complete an exit interview.
 - The Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) can also function as a forum for student-athletes to discuss matters that they feel are important for student-athlete welfare.

D. HCU EXCUSED ABSENCE POLICY

Definition

- This policy for University excused absences applies to participation as an athlete, manager or student trainer in NCAA intercollegiate competitions, or participation as a representative of HCU at academic events and artistic performances approved by the Provost or designee.
- Practice or rehearsal for any event is not eligible for consideration as an excused absence.
- This policy excludes those academic endeavors that require the completion of a predetermined number of clock hours. Departmental practices and procedures should be consistent with this policy.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

- Students shall inform their instructors of dates they will miss class due to an excused absence prior to the date of that anticipated absence. For activities such as athletic competitions with schedules known prior to the start of a semester, students must provide their instructors during the first week of each semester a written schedule showing days they expect to miss classes. For other university excused absences students must provide each instructor at the earliest possible time the dates that they will miss.
- **It is the responsibility of the student to request from the instructor an opportunity to complete missed assignments, activities, labs, examinations or other course requirements in a timely manner.** Contact the Director of Academics for questions or assistance communicating with professors. **(*NOTE: student-athletes must arrange to make up all classwork including lectures, assignments and exams BEFORE they miss the class. Failure to notify the professor and/or make arrangements prior to the absence may result in an absence counting, failing assignments, or other penalties.)**
- Students are responsible for all material covered in classes that they miss, even when their absences are excused, as defined above.
- Missed classroom activities will be rescheduled at the discretion of the instructor.
- Students should be aware that excessive absences — whether excused or unexcused — may affect their ability to do well in their classes.

- The student absence policy can be found at: <https://hc.edu/university-catalog/university-catalog/undergraduate-policies/#attendancerequirements>

Faculty Responsibility

- Instructors are responsible for providing students with an equitable way to make up missed work due to an absence excused by this policy.
- Instructors should inform students in a timely manner of procedures to make up missed work, e.g., including the information in the course syllabus.
- Instructors may not penalize students for absences excused by this policy.

Violation of Academic Conduct Regulations

- Falsifying information or documentation in order to obtain an excused absence is considered a violation of the Code of Student Conduct and Academic Conduct Regulations.
- Sharing information about a make-up examination or quiz with other students is deemed a violation of the Code of Student Conduct and Academic Conduct Regulations.
- Anyone found responsible for falsifying information or documentation in order to obtain an excused absence or sharing examination or quiz information may face consequences per the Academic Integrity Policy section of the catalog, in addition to any sanction(s) imposed by the administration and/or the athletic department.

E. POLICY FOR ON-CAMPUS RECRUITING VISITS

All athletic recruiting visits will be conducted according to HCU's high standards of ethical behavior. Accordingly, the following rules apply to campus recruiting visits:

1. The purpose of a campus recruiting visit is to allow prospective student-athletes and their families fair and ethical assessment of their opportunities for academic and athletic success and integration into the collegiate experience at HCU, while at the same time allowing HCU to evaluate a prospective student-athlete for admission and participation in HCU's intercollegiate program. All participants in a campus recruiting visit (including prospective student-athletes and HCU student-athletes and staff) share a responsibility to facilitate the goals of the visit through conduct that adheres to acceptable forms of community behavior, withstands public scrutiny, and serves to maintain public confidence in the integrity of HCU and the individuals involved.
2. During any campus recruiting visits, HCU team members and prospective student-athletes must follow all NCAA and HCU rules, including general HCU policies and procedures as well as athletics department and team rules. It is the responsibility of HCU student-athlete hosts and the coaches for the respective sport to inform a prospective student-athlete of any rules relevant to the recruiting visit or relevant to any situations which the prospect may encounter.
3. A student host must be a current HCU student-athlete, or a host may be designated in a manner consistent with HCU's manner for providing hosts for non-athlete prospective students. Hosts and Houston Christian staff should strive to provide prospective student-athletes a reasonable and appropriate environment that resembles the customary lifestyle of an enrolled student-athlete.
4. Hosts and prospects are required to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that reflects a high degree of personal integrity, consideration and responsibility and which will not discredit or harm themselves, any other individual, or HCU. The host may not engage in, shall take reasonable action to prevent prospects from engaging in, and shall not expose prospects to any activity that may harm the safety or well-being of any person. Hosts and prospects shall maintain the good reputation of HCU and will refrain from any conduct that may damage the University's or department's reputation.
5. Host money will be used only for food and entertainment; it is forbidden to use such funds for alcohol or any other activity that may reflect poorly on HCU or the department. Hosts may not take recruits to any bar or any club that has a minimum age of 21 for entry. Additionally, all persons attending a meal during an official visit are limited to \$40 per person per meal for the value of the meal.
6. In providing a prospective student-athlete with air transportation to the HCU campus, HCU shall provide only coach-class, commercial air transportation, without the use of upgrades. No special vehicles (as defined by the NCAA) shall be used to

transport prospects during their recruiting visit. Only standard lodging at area hotels or on campus shall be provided and shall not include any special accessories or amenities that are not available generally to all guests of the lodging establishment. All meals must be of substantially the same nature as those served on campus.

7. HCU is prohibited from engaging in miscellaneous, personalized promotional activities or any “game-day simulations” (as defined by the NCAA) during a recruiting visit. Prospective student-athletes are allowed, at the discretion of the head coach, to be present in the locker room before or after a competition or to stand on the sidelines during pre-game activities prior to being seated in general seating areas during the athletic event.
8. Any conduct that violates this policy may result in Houston Christian ceasing to recruit the prospect, and may also result in other disciplinary action, including the host’s loss of privileges, loss of scholarship, or dismissal from the team or the University. HCU staff members engaging in or condoning violations of this policy will be held personally accountable and may be subject to institutional discipline.
9. Coaches, staff members, and student-athletes cannot make any public comments, including social network sites, concerning a prospective student-athlete's visit or recruitment in general.
10. Coaches must receive pre-approval from the compliance office before an official visit to ensure all required academic and NCAA documentation has been received and logged. This includes a high school transcript and logging the student's NCAA account on the HCU Institutional Request List with the Eligibility Center for high school PSA's, and college transcript(s) for transfer PSA's. Though it is not required, it is recommended to have a potential student-athletes SAT/ACT scores submitted to gauge admissibility to HCU and their meeting of NCAA eligibility standards.

F. SELF-REPORTING AND INVESTIGATIONS

An important aspect of NCAA compliance is the self-reporting of rules violations. Level III violations (formerly “secondary”) result in minor, if any, penalties, especially if they are infrequent and correctable. Coaches, athletics staff, and student-athletes must take a proactive stance in reporting these and all other violations as soon as they are discovered.

Self-reporting is important for several reasons. Immediate awareness of possible alleged violations provides an opportunity for the department to correct the situation before it develops into a major infraction. Immediate awareness also identifies areas that can be addressed in departmental policy and/or continuing education programs. Lastly self-reporting violations reflects a solid program of institutional control.

The HCU Athletic Department policy is to self-report any violations to the NCAA and as required, taking into account the NCAA interpretive philosophy. Depending on the nature of the possible violation, a speedy, objective, and thorough review of the situation will be completed by the Compliance Office in consultation with the athletic director, FAR, SWA, President, conference or NCAA offices as necessary. Typically, the review will determine the level of violation that is reported to the NCAA and conference, or that there was not a violation incurred. If eligibility is impacted for a violation the Compliance Office will declare the student-athlete(s) ineligible and seek reinstatement from the NCAA. The Compliance Office is responsible for ensuring any assessed penalties are imposed in accordance with the sanctions proposed in the violation report and approved by the NCAA.

If there is a systemic issue, intentional bad acts or the possibility of a major violation (Level I or II), the Athletic Director and FAR will be immediately informed. The University’s General Counsel will be consulted as well for active involvement or referring matters to outside counsel. The Compliance Office will initiate a preliminary inquiry including but not limited to interviews with coaches, staff and student-athletes, reviewing records, and identifying all involved parties. The main purposes of the preliminary inquiry are to obtain information, determine the likelihood of an infraction and determine the nature of the infraction. HCU’s athletic staff, coaches, and student-athletes are required by NCAA rules to fully cooperate and disclose all information regarding possible rules violations. Failure to cooperate will result in an unethical charge from the NCAA which could mean termination from Houston Christian University, no future employment at an NCAA institution or, for student-athletes, an end to their athletic careers. The best policy is to be up-front with all information and work through the NCAA process for investigations.

After the preliminary inquiry, the Assistant Athletic Director for Compliance and Academics shall consult with the Athletics Director,

Faculty Athletic Representative, and any other appropriate University personnel about any discoveries to decide upon a course of action. If the preliminary inquiry indicates no evidence of a violation, the Assistant Athletic Director for Compliance and Academics and Athletic Director will agree that no further action will need to be taken. Should a violation have occurred the Athletic Director will notify the appropriate members of the Athletic Department, President's Staff, Conference staff, and/or NCAA staff.

Should a possible violation be discovered or suspected by the Conference office or NCAA, the athletic department, university staff, student-athletes and any representatives of athletics interest who may be involved or called on are expected to cooperate fully with investigators. When appropriate, the institution will conduct its own investigation simultaneously and will turn in all pertinent findings to the conference or NCAA investigators.

STUDENT-ATHLETE CORE GUARANTEES

The NCAA is putting in place new core guarantees for college athletes. Formerly known as the student-athlete holistic model, [these core guarantees](#) will enhance student-athlete benefits and services, expand scholarship protections and enhance expectations of Division I schools. The core guarantees cover student-athletes at Division I schools, plus student-athletes at a Division II or III school participating in a Division I sport. The core guarantees became effective Aug. 1, 2024.

These core guarantees require schools to provide student-athletes academic services and career counseling. Schools also must provide life skills training and education in at least nine specified areas:

- **Mental Health** – Mental health policies are covered each academic year at the sport specific compliance certification meetings. These policies can also be found in Section XXX on p. 56 of the Student-Athlete Handbook.
- **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging** – HCU Athletics' "Stand as One" Statement is included in Section XXXIV on p. 67 of the Student-Athlete Handbook. Additionally, the athletic department hosts annual events to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month and Black History Month. Additionally, HCU Athletics makes it a point to celebrate each foreign athlete's heritage through the playing of that athlete's national anthem prior to a selected home game of that athlete's sport.
- **Sexual Violence Prevention** – Sexual violence prevention policies are touched on each academic year at the sport specific compliance certification meetings. Each individual team will then proceed to have a separate meeting on the topic.
- **Transfer Requirements** – Transfer requirements are discussed each academic year at the sport specific compliance certification meetings. These requirements can also be found in Section XVI on p. 27 of the Student-Athlete Handbook.
- **Strength & Conditioning** - Each sports respective strength coach will conduct a meeting with the team prior to the start of the season regarding technique, safety, and goals for the year.
- **Nutrition** – Our HCU Athletic nutritionist will conduct a meeting with each team annually to discuss nutrition and offering their services to coach and student-athletes to help design menus and develop nutritional goals.
- **Financial Literacy** - HCU Athletics conducts an online financial literacy class that is sent out to student-athletes annually. This may also be supplemented with a financial literacy seminar with a local financial establishment.
- **Career preparation** – Career and Calling provides assistance for students and alumni in exploring one's life calling through personal discovery, vocational exploration, and educational training. Each team will meet with Career and Calling within the first couple months of each school year to discuss what HCU offers in career preparation.
- **Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) Opportunities** – Each year INFLCR will hold a seminar for student-athletes to discuss how to achieve NIL agreements. NIL is also covered in section XX (p. 32) of the Student-Athlete Handbook.

Student-Athlete Health Care and Medical Services

These core guarantees expand the standard of care beyond the autonomy schools to all of Division I. They require schools to cover medical costs for an athletically related injury for at least two years after either graduation or separation from the school, or until the student-athlete qualifies for coverage under the NCAA Catastrophic Injury Insurance Program, whichever occurs first. They also include out-of-pocket medical expenses, such as coinsurance, copayments, deductibles and other medical expenses not reimbursed by insurance. The NCAA also sponsors the Post-Eligibility Insurance Program for student-athletes in all three divisions. This is considered "excess coverage" from what Division I schools are required to provide and does not replace a school's obligation to provide medical

care. Division I schools will need to attest to being in compliance with consensus-based guidance on providing health, safety and performance support as identified by the NCAA Board of Governors, such as Cardiac Care Best Practices, Mental Health Best Practices and the Concussion Safety Protocol Checklist.

Any new athletics aid agreements must meet new requirements designed to mirror existing protections already provided to most scholarship student-athletes attending autonomy schools. Schools cannot reduce, cancel or fail to renew athletics aid for athletics reasons, such as:

- Injury
- Physical or Mental Illness
- Athletic Ability or Performance
- Contribution to Team Success
- Roster Management Decisions

These core guarantees expand the eligibility for degree completion funding to any former student-athlete who received a scholarship in a head-count sport (football, basketball, women's gymnastics, women's volleyball and women's tennis – all scholarships in these sports are full rides) or who received financial aid that resulted in the value of full tuition and fees, living expenses and required course-related books while at the school.

VI. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

General

To be eligible for and to retain an athletic scholarship, all student-athletes must comply with all applicable regulations of HCU and the NCAA. They must also fulfill all their obligations as student-athletes at HCU, including those set forth within the Student-Athlete Handbook. Voluntary withdrawal from a sport at any time for personal reasons, however, is cause for immediate termination of aid. It should be noted that pursuant to NCAA 15.3.4 et.al., a student-athlete can also have his or her aid cancelled or reduced if it is determined that the athlete fraudulently misrepresents his/her intention to participate in a particular sport either by not reporting for practices or by making only token appearances as determined by the institution, or has engaged in misconduct as set forth within this HCU student-athlete handbook and/or the HCU Student Code of Conduct.

It is the general policy for HCU to award athletic scholarships for a period of one year, however, scholarships normally will be renewed for subsequent years. Upon recommendation of the Director of Athletics, the Director of Financial Services will notify the student-athlete in writing, by December 15 for midyear reductions/cancellations or July 1 for the next academic year, of intent to cancel or reduce athletic financial aid. Cancellation and/or reduction of financial assistance may be appealed by the student-athlete to the Financial Aid Appeals Committee. Appeals must be brought to the committee's attention within ten (10) days of receiving the notice to have the appeal considered. Once notified, an appeals hearing will be scheduled. The committee hearing the appeal will consist of a panel of representatives from various campus departments e.g. Student Life, Financial Aid, Office of the Provost etc. The hearing shall consist of the athletic department and student-athlete having separate meetings during the hearing. Generally, a ruling will be issued within two (2) business days.

All NCAA rules and official interpretations governing financial aid to student-athletes may be found in the NCAA Manual or the NCAA website (www.ncaa.org).

Institutional and University Grants

If a prospective student-athlete (PSA) has already applied to HCU but has not signed on to athletic scholarship, the PSA may receive a letter from HCU stating that they will receive an Institutional Grant or University Grant from the HCU Financial Aid Office. Once they receive an athletic scholarship, they will automatically lose the institutional or state-governed need-based grant (e.g. a TEG or IEG). If they are on a University Grant awarded due to academic achievements, they will be able to keep it but athletic aid may be correspondingly reduced to stay within NCAA scholarship limits.

Financial Aid to Fifth-Year and Medical Disqualification Student-Athletes

Fifth-year and medical disqualification student-athletes are those SA's seeking to finish their undergraduate degree within their "five-year clock" and who have no athletic eligibility remaining. The aid available for those that qualify and are recommended to continue receiving aid will be at a level (percentage of full grant) comparable to their years of participation. All student-athletes who are not competing but receiving financial aid will be required to fulfill the 20 hours per week work requirement within the Athletic Department. Should the student-athlete not fulfill the 20-hour obligation, his/her financial aid could be withdrawn.

The Director of Athletics will make specific assignments in conjunction with the student-athlete's head coach. All individuals receiving fifth-year aid must be approved by the Director of Athletics on the recommendation from the Head Coach.

Summer School

Current student-athletes who take summer school courses at HCU may have their athletic scholarship percentages applied to the costs of attending a summer term in proportion to the percentage of athletics aid received during the previous academic year (fall/spring). For incoming student-athletes, summer school can be paid for in proportion to the percentage of athletics aid they will receive during the next academic year. For all student-athletes, note that HCU institutional academic and other financial aid awards only apply during the regular academic year are not available to students for use in the summer term. Because other aid may not carry over, the breakdown of how financial aid is applied may differ in the summer than during the regular year. The Athletics Department will make every effort to maximize the effectiveness of the aid.

All students enrolled in summer courses are expected to attend all classes and put forth the effort required to be successful in the class. If a student-athlete drops a summer school course prior to drop date deadlines, the student-athlete *may* be required to pay back all expenses incurred to attend that course including tuition, room, fees, books, and stipend.

Student-athletes at HCU have the opportunity to remain on the campus to train over the summer while taking summer school classes. This allows for the athletes to get ahead in their education while continuing to be able to train. The current policy on Summer School is below:

1. HCU will pay for a portion of summer school tuition equal to the percentage of **athletic aid** that the student received during the course of the previous academic year. For clarification on what summer aid will be given to each student, the Assistant Director of Compliance/Scholarships will be able to advise prior to the start of summer.
2. HCU will generally cover the cost of two courses (based on the athletic aid percentage received during the academic year) during the entire summer. These two courses can be taken either in summer one or summer two or may be broken up to take one in each of summer one or summer two. The number of courses may vary based upon whether the student needs extra hours for eligibility or graduation purposes. Enrollment in more than two courses will need to be **pre-approved** by the Director of Academics and the Athletic Director before registration occurs.
3. Student-athletes living on campus and eligible to receive a stipend per their scholarship will receive one based upon the number of class days that they are on campus over the summer for meals.
4. Per NCAA rules, athletes in some sports may be allowed to remain on campus over the course of the summer to train without being enrolled in summer school classes. These student-athletes will need to meet certain NCAA requirements and have the approval of their head coach, the Director of Academics and the Director of Athletics to do so. These students will receive the same meal stipend as those student-athletes taking summer courses.

Grant-In-Aid Renewals

Athletic scholarships are renewed on an annual basis in accordance with NCAA rules at the level of their original value unless:

1. The coach and student-athlete mutually agree to gradation (up or down) and the change is not challenged. Even if the change is not challenged initially, the student still receives a letter from the Senior Financial Aid Advisor advising of his/her right to appeal.
2. It is determined by thorough investigation that the recommendation of downward gradation or non-renewal is warranted because

of the following:

- a. Failure to fulfill the obligations expected of all student-athletes on athletic scholarships.
- b. Academic ineligibility.
- c. An unwillingness to participate in the athletic program of the University.
- d. Withdrawing from the University.
- e. Failure to meet financial aid requirements of the NCAA or HCU.
- f. It is determined that the individual is not eligible for financial aid because the award would not be in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of Awarding Institutional Aid as outlined in the current NCAA Manual and/or financial aid agreement.
- g. Graduation/reduced term load.

Change of Sport - Scholarship Athletes

If a student-athlete is recruited and signed in one sport and decides to participate exclusively in a different sport, the change must be approved by the Director of Athletics. In addition, the second sport must immediately be able to provide the funding for the student-athlete's scholarship.

Student-Athlete Employment

Earnings from a student-athletes on or off-campus employment that occurs at any time is exempt and is not counted in determining a student-athlete's full grant-in-aid or in the institution's financial aid limitations, provided:

1. The student-athlete is compensated only for work actually performed; and
2. The student-athlete is compensated at a rate commensurate with the going rate in that locality for similar services.

Student-athletes must notify the athletics compliance office prior to starting a job to complete employment forms to ensure all NCAA rules are being followed. Notification can be provided through submission of the Employment Form in Front Rush that is available at all times. Specifically, student-athletes are asked to provide their employment information (regardless if they have a job or not) in August as part of the pre-season compliance meeting/data collection and in April as part of the summer compliance data collection. Student-athletes are told to update their employment status whenever they start or end a job at all other times of year, and reminded of this fact prior to Christmas break (when students may take on seasonal work or start a new job for the spring semester).

HCU Athletics has partnered with *Athletes 2 Careers (A2C)*, a company that assists with preparing and connecting student-athletes with various businesses and organizations throughout the United States. For more information about Athletes 2 Careers and how you can get involved with their services, please contact the Assistant Director of Compliance/Scholarships.

Student-Athlete Employment at Camps or Clinics

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

1. The student-athlete must perform duties that are of a general supervisory nature in addition to any coaching or officiating assignments.
2. Compensation provided to the student-athlete shall be commensurate with the going rate for camp or clinic counselors of like teaching ability and camp or clinic experience and may not be paid on the basis of the value that the student-athlete may have for the employer because of the athletics reputation or fame the student-athlete has achieved. It is not permissible to establish varying levels of compensation for a student-athlete employed in a sports camp or clinic based on the level of athletics skills of the student-athlete.
3. A student-athlete who only lectures or demonstrates at a camp/clinic may not receive compensation for his or her appearance at the camp/clinic. As with any other form of employment the student-athlete must come by the athletic compliance office prior to starting a job to fill out proper employment forms to ensure all NCAA rules are being followed.

A student-athlete may be paid to provide skill instruction for a fee independent from an established camp or club, however, must report these lessons in advance using the Fee-for-Lesson form in Front Rush. Details regarding the individual(s) receiving the lessons must be documented within this form.

Income Tax Information for Student-Athletes on Athletic Scholarship

While the athletic department recommends that student-athletes or their parents or guardians seek independent tax advice, the athletic department does point out that for U.S. citizens and resident aliens, tuition, fees, books & supplies are tax free; however, amounts for the room and board portion for an athletic scholarship are taxable.

Nonresident aliens (international students) are subject to special tax rules and such rules may differ from country to country. Furthermore, the U.S. has income tax treaties with certain countries, and under these treaties, tax treatment of scholarship may vary. We recommend you seek tax advice.

All non-US citizen student-athletes should be aware that there may be tax implications of their scholarships, and to make sure they comply with all United States tax laws. If you need help determining the value of the room and board portion of your scholarship, students may call the Financial Aid office or the Office of International Student Services.

Parking Stickers

Student-athlete parking stickers are not covered by athletic scholarships. It is the student-athlete's responsibility to pay the required parking sticker charge either through the Cashiers Office or on HuskyNet. If the student-athlete will not have a vehicle on campus, a waiver **must** be filed the first week of school, which will need to be submitted through HuskyNet. Parking sticker charges may not be removed from accounts after this time

VII. ROOM AND BOARD FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES

If a student-athlete receives any financial aid for room and board, it is expected that he or she will be assigned to University housing. The room portion of an athletic scholarship will cover the cost of a basic room floor plan (contact the Assistant Director of Compliance/Scholarships or HCU Residence Life to identify what those floor plans are). Any student-athlete who chooses to stay in a more expensive room will be responsible for paying the difference in cost. Any student-athlete that receives board paid for by the Athletic Department will be required to take the unlimited meal plan. Any appeals to this can be made by the Head Coach to the Athletic Director.

Meal Policy During Holiday Periods when Meals Are Not Served on Campus

Only those student-athletes who are required to remain on campus for official practice or competition may receive meals over holiday and vacation periods when food service is closed on campus. Student-athletes must follow the set meal limits. Check with your coach concerning meals during these periods.

Summer Housing

Student-athletes must be enrolled in the current summer session in order to live on campus unless they meet an exception specific to their sport (see Director of Academics for more information). If a student-athlete drops a class and is no longer enrolled in that term, they must move out of university housing immediately. They cannot store their belongings in the room, even if they are enrolled in the next session.

For athletes taking online courses but not living on campus over the summer, they will not be eligible for summer board checks. In some instances, athletes in NCAA approved sports will be allowed to remain on campus through the summer to train and will be given housing and board. These instances will need the approval of both the head coach involved and the athletic director.

VIII. TRAINING RULES AND PERSONAL CONDUCT

In addition to the conduct requirements established within the "HCU Student-Athlete Conduct Resolution" (see III), player conduct and dress policies applicable to each team shall be established by the coaches for each sport. These policies shall ensure that team members conduct themselves in a manner that will reflect positively on themselves, their team, and HCU.

Student-athletes shall not partake of alcoholic beverages while representing HCU at athletic events, official team activities, or at social functions held in conjunction with those events.

IX. HAZING

Hazing at HCU is illegal and will not be tolerated. Hazing includes but is not limited to:

Hazing refers to any intentional, knowing, or reckless act by one or more persons that occurs on or off campus, and is directed against a student for the purpose of joining, being initiated into, or maintaining full status in a university group or organization. Such acts include, but are not limited to, the following: any type of physical brutality, such as, beating, striking, branding, sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, calisthenics, any activity involving the consumption of a food, liquid, alcoholic beverage, drug, or other substance or any other activity that subjects the student to risk or harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student, or any activity that intimidates or threatens the student or that subjects them to extreme mental stress, shame, abuse or humiliation. Giving consent to allow hazing is not a defense against hazing.

Hazing is prohibited and is a violation of both HCU policy (see student conduct section) and Texas State Law, and may subject a violator to both criminal prosecution (punishable by fines and/or jail time) and HCU disciplinary action.

Any team or team member found to have participated in such actions will be dealt with in an appropriate manner.

X. GAMBLING

Student-athletes, coaches and staff are strongly reminded of the following NCAA rule governing gambling activities: Staff members of the athletics department of member institutions and student-athletes shall not knowingly:

- A. Provide information to individuals involved in organized gambling activities concerning intercollegiate athletics competition;
- B. Solicit a bet on any intercollegiate team;
- C. Accept a bet on any team representing the institution; or
- D. Participate in any gambling activity that involves intercollegiate athletics or professional athletics, through a bookmaker, a parlay card or any other method employed by organized gambling (online etc.)

This would include, but not be limited to, all types of sports pool wagering, i.e. an NCAA basketball pool, or fantasy sports. It is very important to remember that to be involved in any such activity could result in not only the possible forfeiture of games and/or events, and the forfeiture of all financial aid; but also state or federal charges being brought against the individual or individuals involved. Remember that even sharing information about team matters such as injuries, strategy, or starters can be used by gamblers and could be construed as being illegal. With the advent of the 2018 U.S. Supreme Court ruling allowing each state to determine whether it will allow sports betting within its boundaries, it is necessary for the department to be more vigilant than ever about this issue. This rule is especially important to remember with the push to legalize sports gambling in numerous states.

XI. TRAVEL POLICY

Student-athletes are able to collect and keep frequent-flier miles from team and university-related airline travel. However, any points awarded because of hotel stays are not eligible to be received by the student-athletes during university-related travel. Student-athletes are expected to adhere to all travel policies set by coaching staff during trips.

XII. MANDATORY EVENTS FOR ALL STUDENT-ATHLETES

The athletic department has events each year that all student-athletes are required to attend. First and foremost of these is the beginning of the year NCAA certification meeting, which will be held by sport and must be done before an athlete is eligible to practice or compete. Additional celebratory and educational events will be scheduled at a later date and announced to all student-athletes

through their coaches, SAAC and/or department administrators.

XIII. UNIVERSITY BOOK VOUCHER

The University awards each student at HCU a \$1,000.00 book voucher every semester that allows any student to go into the campus bookstore to purchase books and other items. Please be aware this is a **loan**, and **not part of any athletic department scholarships**, and therefore must be repaid.

XIV. ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

A. NCAA INITIAL ELIGIBILITY RULES

The following is a synopsis of NCAA academic regulations. It is meant to give a brief overview of the rules and by no means reflects the only regulations that affect eligibility. For complete information, student-athletes should consult with the Compliance and Academics Office or Athletic Director.

1. Initial Eligibility Certification through the NCAA Eligibility Center

To certify initial eligibility for practice and competition, the NCAA Eligibility Center must have an official final high school transcript, received from a NCAA reviewed and accredited high school, transcripts from all other high schools attended (if applicable) and an official SAT/ACT score report must be sent directly to the Center (code "9999") from the testing agency. To certify amateurism, the student-athlete must request final amateurism certification and be certified an amateur in every sport he or she is participating.

These documents should certify that the student-athlete has the minimum GPA in core courses, and if applicable test score. If academic certification is not complete, a student-athlete may practice but not compete for 45 days from their first official participation with the team. If the eligibility determination is not made by that time, the student-athlete is considered a non-qualifier and not allowed to participate until the student has been deemed a Final Qualifier or served a year-in-residence. (Please note that a student release form must be submitted by the student-athlete directly to the Center to initiate the eligibility certification process.) If amateurism certification is not complete within 45 days of the student-athlete's initial participation with the team, the student-athlete cannot participate at all in NCAA intercollegiate practice or competition until the student-athletes receives final amateurism certification. It is the responsibility of each student-athlete to make sure that the appropriate forms are submitted to the NCAA Initial Eligibility Center.

For further information on NCAA initial eligibility, please go to:

http://fs.ncaa.org/Docs/eligibility_center/Student_Resources/CBSA.pdf

2. Admission Procedures

It is the responsibility of each student-athlete to make sure that his or her admission file is complete. This includes completing the online application process, submitting final official transcripts from high school and/or college(s) (as the case may be), official test scores (for entering freshmen, as applicable), proof of meningitis vaccination, and any other information required by the admissions office.

B. NCAA CONTINUING ELIGIBILITY/SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

1. Full-Time Enrollment

Requirement for Practice and Competition - To be eligible to participate in organized practice sessions and competition, a student-athlete shall be enrolled in a minimum full-time program of studies leading to a baccalaureate or equivalent degree. All HCU undergraduate student-athletes must be enrolled in at least 12 semester hours, and graduate students must be enrolled in at least 9 hours.

Exception: Final Semester. During the final graduating semester, a student-athlete may be enrolled in less than a minimum full-time program. The university must certify that the student is taking all courses necessary to complete his or her degree and HCU certifies

that degree requirements are being met. International student-athletes must file a course load reduction form with the Office of International Student Services prior to the beginning of their final semester if their course load is below the full time enrollment hours listed above.

2. Progress Toward Degree Requirements.

To be eligible to compete, a student-athlete must satisfy all of the following progress-toward-degree requirements based on his or her academic record at the beginning of any other term (fall and spring) of that academic year:

- I. Satisfactorily complete a minimum of 24 semester hours of academic credit prior to the start of the student-athletes second year (third full-time semester) following initial full-time enrollment, 40% of degree-applicable hours required for graduation must be completed by the beginning of the third year, 60% of degree-applicable hours by the beginning of the fourth year, and or 80% of degree-applicable hours by the beginning of the fifth year;
- II. Each academic year, complete 18 hours during the regular fall and spring semesters (excluding summer); and
- III. Each regular academic term, earn six degree-applicable semester hours to be eligible for the next regular academic term. Football student-athletes need nine degree-applicable hours in the fall to be eligible for the first four games the following fall. Summer hours CANNOT be used towards fulfilling the six or nine-hour requirement.

All HCU students must complete at least 120 semester hours with at least a 2.00 cumulative GPA to receive a degree. Some degrees require more than 120 semester hours so the percentage of hours earned would be higher after each year.

***NCAA rules have priority over HCU regulations**

Entering second year of collegiate enrollment:

- 24 semester hours
- 18 hours earned during academic year (fall and spring only)
- 90% of GPA for graduation (1.80 HCU GPA)
- Six degree-applicable credits per term (*FB SA's must earn 9 hours in the fall to be eligible for first four games the following fall)

Entering third year of collegiate enrollment:

- 40% of degree requirements (50 degree-applicable semester hours for 125-hour degree, 48 degree-applicable semester hours for 120-hour degree)
- 18 hours earned during academic year (fall and spring only)
- 95% of GPA for graduation (1.90 HCU GPA)
- Six degree-applicable credits per term (*FB SA's must earn 9 hours in the fall to be eligible for first four games the following fall)
- Declaration of degree program based on designated major on file with Office of Academic Records (cannot be undeclared)

Entering fourth year of collegiate enrollment:

- 60% of degree requirements (75 degree-applicable semester hours for 125-hour degree, 72 degree-applicable semester hours for 120-hour degree)
- 18 hours earned during academic year (fall and spring only)
- 100% of GPA for graduation (2.00 HCU GPA)
- Six degree-applicable credits per term (*FB SA's must earn 9 hours in the fall to be eligible for first four games the following fall)

Entering fifth year of collegiate enrollment:

- 80% of degree requirements (100 degree-applicable semester hours for 125-hour degree, 96 degree-applicable semester hours for 120-hour degree)
- 18 hours earned during academic year (fall and spring only)
- 100% of GPA for graduation (2.00 HCU GPA)

- Six degree-applicable credits per term (*FB SA's must earn 9 hours in the fall to be eligible for first four games the following fall)

Transfers. To be eligible for competition, a transfer student-athlete must have earned at least six hours in their last full-time semester enrolled at their previous institution and meet the requirements of *Section 2- Progress Towards Degree* (using academic credit earned at any collegiate institution). Two-year college transfers have additional eligibility requirements for hours and grade point average earned at the two-year college.

Regaining Eligibility. A student-athlete (other than baseball) who does not meet the 24 hours' semester requirements of Section I of the Progress Towards Degree Requirements listed above may become eligible at the beginning of the next academic term by successfully completing 24 semester hours during the previous two semesters. Baseball student-athletes must have met eligibility requirements for the previous fall term in order to be eligible to compete in the spring.

Application of Rule. For the 18 semester hour requirement, this rule applies once a student-athlete initially enrolls as a full time student. Hours earned while enrolled part-time during a regular term may be used to meet this requirement.

Summer Credits Hours. Summer credit hours may be used to satisfy the 24-credit hour requirement when certifying a student-athlete entering his or her second year of collegiate enrollment. Summer hours may also be used to meet the 40/60/80 – percent-of-degree requirements.

3. Designation of Program Studies

All student-athletes must designate a program of studies leading to a specific degree by the beginning of the third year or 5th semester of enrollment and thereafter shall make progress toward that specific degree. A transfer student entering the third year or 5th semester also must designate a program of studies even though they have not completed a year in residence or used a season of eligibility.

4. Fulfillment of Minimum Grade-Point Average Requirements

Student-athletes must maintain a minimum grade point average based on their length of college enrollment.

- a. A student-athlete who is entering his or her second year or third full time term of collegiate enrollment shall present cumulative minimum grade-point average of 1.800 that equals at least 90 percent of the cumulative minimum grade-point required for graduation. At HCU that minimum is 2.000.
- b. A student-athlete who is entering his or her third year or fifth full time term of collegiate enrollment shall present a cumulative minimum grade-point average of 1.900 that equals 95 percent for the cumulative minimum grade-point average required for graduation. At HCU the minimum is 2.000.
- c. A student-athlete entering his or her fourth year or seventh full time term of enrollment (and any subsequent term of enrollment) shall present a cumulative minimum grade point average that equals 2.000, the grade point average required for graduation at HCU. A student-athlete must maintain the 2.000 grade point average if they enter a fifth year or ninth full-time term.

5. Acceptable Academic Credit and Administration of Satisfactory Progress

The following selected regulations govern acceptable degree credit and satisfactory progress. Please contact the Compliance and Academics Office with any questions or concerns.

- a. Credit-by examination/advanced placement tests. These may be used to meet the minimum progress toward degree requirements only if the subject tested is offered by the institution as acceptable degree credit.
- b. Prior approval-summer courses at other institutions. Prior approval by appropriate academic officials of the certifying institution is required if courses taken during another institution's summer term are to be utilized in determining the student's academic status (i.e., good academic standing and satisfactory progress). In order to complete the process of transferring a summer course to HCU,

there must be an approved Request for Off Campus Transfer Credit Form as well as an official transcript from the institution (with a grade of C or better) on file with the Office of Academic Records.

c. Incompletes are used for satisfactory progress only when the “I” grade has been removed under the normal University policy applicable to all students and a grade acceptable to the University has replaced it. The course may be used only once, either during the term the course was taken or during the term the “I” was replaced.

d. Repeated Courses. Credit for courses that are repeated may be used to satisfy the minimum academic progress requirements only under the following conditions:

1. Credit for a course repeated due to a non-passing initial grade would count in the semester the course was satisfactorily completed.
2. A course with a satisfactory (passing) initial grade may be utilized once and when repeated, the credit would only count in the initial semester the course was passed.
3. Credit for a course that may be taken several times shall be limited by institutional regulations.
4. Credit earned in courses that may be taken several times may not exceed the maximum institutional limit for credits of that type for any baccalaureate degree program.

C. HOUSTON CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC REGULATIONS

***Note: These are HCU specific and lower than what the NCAA requires. Student-athletes must meet NCAA standards to practice and compete.**

HCU Good Academic Standing Requirements

0 to 48 hours must maintain 1.80 cumulative grade point average

49 to 72 hours must maintain a 1.90 cumulative grade point average

73 hours and above must maintain a 2.00 cumulative grade point average

1. Academic Warning

Academic warning applies to any student failing to maintain the acceptable minimum GPA at the end of their first or second semester. Notification of the action will be sent to the student and the faculty advisor and will be recorded on the student’s permanent transcript.

2. Academic Probation

Any undergraduate student who has failed to earn the cumulative scholastic levels designated above and who is ineligible for Academic Warning will be placed on Academic Probation and removed from the list of degree candidates until the appropriate cumulative standing is attained. A student on Academic Probation must earn a 2.00 GPA standing in the current semester to be eligible to continue in enrollment beyond that semester. Removal from Academic Probation requires that the student meets the required scholastic levels as set forth in the “Scholastic Standing” section of the HCU Catalog. Students on Academic Probation are not eligible to represent the University unless they receive a waiver from the Provost. Notification of the action will be sent to the student and the faculty advisor and will be recorded on the student’s permanent transcript.

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions is responsible for the Admissions Review Board (ARB). The ARB reviews all admissions exceptions and cases where undergraduate students have not met the minimum requirements to be admitted automatically to the University. The ARB convenes regularly during the semester to go over the corresponding files while paying particular attention to the academic history of the student, their standardized test scores (SAT/ACT), letters of recommendation, official transcripts from high school/previous institutions and any other supporting documentation that can help the committee reach an admissions decision.

Graduate students seeking information on academic probation see the “Academic Standing-Graduate” section of the University Catalog.

3. Academic Suspension

An undergraduate student on academic probation who fails to attain a 2.0 GPA standing in the current semester will be suspended and may not apply for readmission until at least one (1) full semester has passed. A student who is suspended must submit a re-entry application at least thirty days before the next semester begins. A personal statement of approximately 250 words and two letters of recommendation from HCU faculty must support the student's application for re-entry. After receipt of these documents by the Office of Admissions, an interview with the Director of Admissions will be scheduled. A student on first suspension will be readmitted at the Director's discretion. If admission is denied, the student may appeal in writing to the Admissions Review Board. Students who are placed on academic suspension will be notified of that action in writing. The action will be recorded on the student's permanent record.

A student who is suspended for a second time may not be readmitted until at least two semesters have passed. A student on second suspension must submit a re-entry application at least one month before the semester for which admission is requested begins. When reapplying after second suspension, the student must submit a personal statement of approximately 250 words in writing to the Admissions Review Board. Two (2) letters of academic recommendation from HCU faculty must support the student's application.

A student on second suspension is strongly encouraged to enroll in at least twelve (12) hours at another regionally-accredited institution during the two (2) semesters the student is sitting out. The student should achieve a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.5 to improve their opportunity to be reinstated at HCU by the Admissions Review Board. Any course in which the student has earned a grade of "F" at HCU cannot be repeated at another institution for transfer credit at HCU. For the re-entry application to be processed, an official transcript must be sent directly from the institution to the Office of Admissions.

A student who is suspended for a third time is not eligible for readmission.

A student who is admitted after a suspension must earn a 2.0 GPA standing in the current semester to continue. Such a student will be readmitted on academic probation and will maintain that status until the required scholastic levels as set forth in the "Scholastic Standing" section of the HCU Catalog are met.

Graduate students seeking information on academic probation see the "Academic Standing-Graduate" section of the University Catalog.

4. Administrative Drop of a Student from a Course

The Office of Academic Records may administratively drop a student from a course, via an Add/Drop form, with the approval of the instructor, the advisor, and the dean of the college or school in which the course is taught. The administrative withdrawal of a student from a course may occur only through the last day for dropping a course with a grade of "W," usually the first day of the eighth week of a Fall and Spring semesters, or All-Summer semester, and the 15th day of the First or Second 5 1/2-week, or the First or Second 4-week summer sessions. These dates are specified for each academic semester and can be found here: <https://hc.edu/university-catalog/academic-calendar/>. A student may be withdrawn from a class for reasons including, but not limited to, the following:

1. If the prerequisites or co-requisites as listed in the current HCU Catalog for the course from which the student is being withdrawn have not been met.
2. If there are circumstances beyond the student's control (serious illness, accident, etc.) that will involve excessive absences in the course from which the student is being withdrawn.
3. The student has not attended a class up to the census date, or other matters pertaining to financial aid and compliance with law.

Dropping or withdrawing from the University are serious matters and cannot be accomplished by email, phone calls, voice messages or purporting to have told someone at the University that the student is not returning or has chosen not to attend. Formal rules and documents must be fulfilled to drop or withdraw with the approval of the Office of Academic Records required.

XV. ACADEMIC SERVICES

A. TUTORS

Contact your coach or the Director of Academics if you need a tutor. For additional academic help, visit the Academic Success Center located on the first floor of the Moody Library or email asc@HBU.edu.

B. STUDY HALL PROCEDURES

The head coach in each sport determines the study hall requirements for his/her team. Should a student-athlete be required to attend study hall, he/she is expected to be on time and prepared with books and materials to study.

C. REGISTRATION AND SCHEDULING

1. It is important to keep conflicts between course schedules and practice and/or competition to a minimum. Please notify the head coach as soon as any such unavoidable conflicts arise. During the semester, often conflicts due to competition and/or injury/illness occur. Student-athletes must contact their professors in advance to prearrange how to make-up lectures, assignments or exams that will be missed. In emergency situations, contact the head coach and the Director of Academics as soon as possible so that professors can be notified.

2. Remember, undergraduate students must be enrolled in 12 hours to be eligible for practice and competition. No student-athlete may drop or add a class during a semester without prior written approval from the Compliance and Academics Office.

EXCEPTION: An exception to the 12-hour requirement may be granted during the final semester, provided the student-athlete carries for credit the hours need to complete his or her degree, and HCU certifies that degree requirements are being met.

D. UNIVERSITY ADVISING PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

The advising process is designed to help the student make important decisions related to academic progress and career aspirations. All HCU students should become familiar with their advisor and the advising process. Undergraduate Advising Procedures: During the freshmen year, all students (except those in the College of Science and Mathematics and School of Fine Arts) are assigned a staff advisor who can help navigate the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum and counsel students on all academic matters, broad career, and vocational interests, etc. After their freshmen year, students will be assigned to a faculty advisor who specializes in the student's particular field of interest or an allied field. The faculty advisor assists the student in planning major-specific educational and career goals. Students may see advisors to:

- Discuss academic successes, challenges, or other issues that may affect academic progress,
- Select courses for each semester,
- Consider a change of major or minor,
- File a degree plan,
- Discuss educational and career goals, and
- Provide personal encouragement and support.

All advisees are expected to avail themselves of these services in order to graduate from HCU in a timely manner since the student is ultimately held responsible for fulfilling his or her degree plan requirements. Failure to utilize these advising services may result in graduation delays, insufficient progress toward completing a degree, and other possible complications. Every HCU student **MUST** schedule a personal academic advising session each semester during his or her advisor's office hours in advance of early registration. The advisee will receive a PIN (Personal Identification Number) at the conclusion of this visit. Once early registration for the upcoming semester begins (see the Academic Calendar at <https://hc.edu/university-catalog/academic-calendar/>), the advisee will use this PIN to sign up online for his or her desired courses. All students are strongly encouraged to make these course schedule decisions with their assigned advisors in a judicious way. The PIN will allow students to change their course choices at any time during the open registration period without incurring any Add/Drop fees.

E. BOOKS

Student-athletes who are on an athletic scholarship that includes books should go to the HCU Bookstore to acquire their books.

Students must take their HCU ID and schedules with them to the bookstore in order to receive their books. At the end of the semester, student-athletes are required to return their books to the HCU Bookstore. If any student decides that they want to keep any of the books, or simply do not return them at the end of the semester, they will be charged for the book at full price. For student-athletes that receive books as part of their scholarship and change their class schedule during the academic year, a Change of Class Form will need to be collected from the Director of Academics that states what class will be dropped, and therefore what books need to be returned, as well as what class (if any) is to be added, and what book(s) need to be picked up from the bookstore for the new class. No student-athlete will be able to acquire new textbooks/materials **without** this form being completed and turned in to the bookstore.

In addition to books, student-athletes may be able to receive materials required for classes from the bookstore paid for by their scholarship. In order for this to occur, the bookstore will need a copy of the class syllabus stating that a material is required for the class. No materials will be charged to a student's scholarship account without syllabus verification.

If materials are required that are for some reason unavailable from the bookstore, students may purchase the items and be reimbursed. Students will need prior approval in order to be reimbursed. Student-athletes will then need to submit the Required Course Materials Reimbursement Form to the Assistant Director of Compliance-Scholarships, as well as their receipt of purchase and course syllabus for authorization of reimbursement. Students will then be issued a check reimbursing them for approved expenses incurred.

F. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Academic integrity is valued at HCU and is at the very heart of the nature of the University as a Christian Liberal Arts Institution. It is the responsibility of all students, faculty, and staff to demonstrate academic integrity. The Academic Integrity policy is designed to promote "the development of moral character, the enrichment of spiritual lives, and the perpetuation of growth in Christian ideals" (HCU Preamble).

Upholding academic integrity provides experience that develops students to act with integrity in all areas of their lives. It is not considered "grace" to allow students to bend rules or act unethically without consequence; to do so violates faculty and staff's obligation to "train the mind, develop the moral character, and enrich the spiritual lives" (HCU Preamble) of students. However, the University is committed to responding in a redemptive manner, seeking to balance compassion with accountability. Students can expect to be treated with Christian love as they deal with alleged academic integrity matters.

In practice, academic integrity means holding oneself to the highest ethical standard in all academic pursuits – doing all individual work alone, relying on one's own knowledge during assessments, engaging truthfully with others, following all university policies and procedures, and encouraging this behavior in fellow students and throughout the HCU community. All academic integrity matters are to be documented in Advocate on the HCU portal which is accessed by clicking on the "Advocate" button.

Academic Dishonesty Defined

Academic integrity is violated when academic dishonesty or misconduct has occurred. As a Christian university, HCU views any act of academic dishonesty as a violation of the University's fundamental principles. Academic dishonesty occurs when a student:

- Submits the work or record of someone else as his/her own;
- Copies another's quiz or exam answers, laboratory work, or written assignments (e.g., homework);
- Willfully cooperates with or seeks aid from another student during an academic assessment;
- Has special information for use in an evaluation activity that is not available to other students in the same activity;
- Accesses unauthorized materials during an exam (e.g., cell phone, textbook, prohibited calculators)
- Copies, uses, buys, sells, or otherwise shares any part of an academic assessment (e.g., an exam);
- Works together with other students on assignments that are clearly intended to be individual in nature;
- Prepares assignments (e.g., papers) for another student to turn in as his/her own work;

- Submits work as his/her own when it is not (i.e., plagiarism). This includes quoting or paraphrasing another's work or ideas without citing and referencing appropriately;
- Submits work for one class that has largely been prepared for and submitted for a grade in another class;
- Falsifies or fabricates data or information;
- Falsifies or fabricates fieldwork documentation (e.g., internship hours).

Other forms of academic misconduct include:

- Destroying, concealing, stealing, or otherwise abusing resource materials (e.g., library books);
- Computer misuse, including illegal use or destruction of computer software or hardware, downloading, emailing, or otherwise accessing unauthorized material (e.g., pornographic content, gambling programs), accessing any computer through a login that belongs to someone else, or otherwise engaging in inappropriate or illegal activity (e.g., hacking, tampering with network, harassment) including the aforementioned using HCU Wi-Fi;
- Unauthorized copying or distribution of copyrighted materials;
- Engaging in research activities with human subjects without the approval of the Research and Development Committee;
- Classroom misconduct, i.e., any conduct which is disrespectful, harassing, aggressive, or otherwise substantially disrupts the progress of the class in the judgment of the faculty member.

The faculty member is responsible for notifying students in every class at the beginning of each term about the Academic Integrity Policy by including the policy in every course syllabus. Students are responsible for knowing and following the policy in all cases. The faculty member or academic administrative officer is responsible for establishing clearly whether academic dishonesty or misconduct has occurred.

The process is to be redemptive in nature. As directed by the faculty member, the student could correct and resubmit the assignment in question or receive a failing grade for the assignment in question. At the sole discretion of the faculty member, the student may be directed to resubmit the assignment in question or the student may receive a failing grade for the assignment in question. However, failing the course specifically as a result of the alleged violation is not an option (although when the grade for the assignment is calculated with grades for all assignments in the course, the result could be failing the course). In all cases, the faculty member shall report the incident to the dean of the college.

The student may appeal the action by following the process outlined in the Academic Grievance Policy and Process. Once an investigation into an alleged violation of academic integrity has begun, the student may not receive a grade of "W" for the course in which the alleged violation occurred. The student should be aware that suspension from the University or other administrative action may be taken in cases of academic dishonesty or misconduct, including but not limited to a pattern of academic dishonesty or misconduct. A decision to suspend a student is made by the Office of the Provost. Inclusion in the HCU Catalog is considered sufficient notice to all students of University policy and procedures regarding this matter.

G. ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE POLICY

A student may file an academic grievance if he or she believes a grade was awarded improperly or for any academic grievance matter. The process for making a grievance is described below and must be followed by all parties in order to resolve a dispute. While the grievance is in step 1 or step 2 it is considered an informal grievance and at step 3 it is considered a formal grievance. Chairs should keep documentation of written complaints as part of step 2 and the Advocate system is used to document any complaint that reaches step 3.

1. The student should make an appointment with the faculty member in question to discuss the matter in person. The student is advised, but not required, to apprise his or her advisor of the matter. It is appropriate to try to resolve differences amicably and in person if at all possible. This is especially true at a Christian institution. If the student is concerned that a private meeting with the faculty member will create antagonism, the student may skip to Step 2. However, the student

must make this concern known in writing to the chair of the department in which the course is located explaining why he or she believes this to be the case.

2. If the student continues to dispute the grade after the face-to-face meeting, the student may bring the matter to the chair of the department. This step requires the student to make a written appeal to the chair and provide a copy to the faculty member and academic advisor. The chair will review the student's concern and consult with the faculty member, either individually or with both present. The chair will respond to the student and the faculty member in writing of the chair's recommendation and notify the dean.
3. If the student is unsatisfied with the chair's recommendation, the student may submit a written request via Advocate to the dean of the college in which the department resides. The dean will review the written appeal and consult with the chair, the faculty member, the advisor and the student. This will occur either individually or in a group as the dean deems appropriate. The student may request a Standards Committee be formed by the dean. The purpose of the Committee is to bring clarity to all sides, allowing for a thoughtful and informed response from the disputants and to assure integrity in the assigning of grades to students by faculty. However, the Committee has no authority to force the change of a grade. The membership of the committee is composed of all parties here to fore mentioned with the dean serving as chair of the Committee. The dean will also select at least one faculty member from the college and one faculty member from another college to serve on the Committee. The student making the complaint should be the only student involved and no legal representation nor any other parties are permitted. After hearing both sides and deliberating the Committee will render a judgment as to what it advises should be done. The hearing and the rendering is the end of the process. No appeals to change a grade are to be made to the Provost or the President.
4. If the student believes that the process or the way in which they were treated was unfair, the student may submit a written appeal to the Provost. The Provost will make a judgment whether or not to accept the appeal (the President is not to be contacted in these matters). If the Provost agrees to hear the matter, only two allegations will be considered: 1) that the process itself is unfair; 2) that the student was not treated fairly in the process. The burden will be on the student to demonstrate with facts and evidence that the process or the treatment was unfair. Depending on the Provost's findings, the matter may be returned to the Standards Committee for further review.
5. At no time should any HCU employee advise a student anonymously or write an appeal document.
6. If a student questions any grade as recorded in the Office of Academic Records, the student has until the end of the full semester following the full term in which the grade was awarded to challenge the accuracy of the record. At the end of this period, the record becomes permanent.

Information for the Department of Nursing Policy and Grade Appeal Process can be found online at <https://hc.edu/university-catalog/university-catalog/undergraduate-policies/#academicgrievancepolicy>.

H. ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

Houston Christian University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities. Students are encouraged to apply for their academic accommodations as early as possible.

In order to request and receive academic accommodations, the student should contact the Director of Testing and Disability Services at 504@HBU.edu to schedule an appointment to discuss and request academic accommodation services. Academic Accommodations must be applied for, approved, and sent out in writing each semester. If academic accommodations are approved, a Letter of Accommodations will then be sent from the university to the professor(s). Please refer to the website, <https://hc.edu/academics/academic-resources/academic-accommodation/> for all accommodation policies and procedures.

XVI. REQUESTS TO TRANSFER

In the event a student-athlete seeks to transfer out of HCU, he/she must contact the Assistant Athletic Director for Compliance and Academics to begin the notification of transfer process. The student-athlete must watch an NCAA Education Module and finish a certificate of completion, along with clearly filling out notification of transfer paperwork. Once all of the transfer documentation is completed and submitted to the Assistant Athletic Director for Compliance and Academics, the institution has two (2) business days to input the information into the NCAA Transfer Portal. Once the student-athlete has been added to the NCAA Transfer Portal, they may begin communication with other institutions. Communication with another institution before being added to the NCAA Transfer Portal would constitute a Level II Violation for the other institution.

Student-athletes who notify the institution of their intent to transfer will still have access to University advising, including the athletics department's Director of Academics and the Academic Success Center. In addition, student-athletes with existing athletically related injuries may still receive treatment as prescribed from the athletic training room. Access to other HCU athletic facilities (including but not limited to fields, courts, sport equipment, locker room, weight room and strength and conditioning staff) will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the head coach in consultation with the Athletic Director. Furthermore, student-athletes who notify the institution of their intent to transfer may be asked to return their team-issued gear and apparel.

Student-athletes should be aware that it is permissible for HCU to discontinue athletic aid at the end of the semester in which the student-athlete notifies the athletic department of his or her intention to transfer. For example, this discontinuation could occur at the end of the fall semester if the notification is given during the fall semester.

Student-athletes may have the opportunity to use the one-time transfer exception as long as they complete the notification of transfer process with the HCU Athletic Compliance Office by their sport specific deadline, sometimes referred to as a transfer window. The deadline/windows are established by the NCAA and are sport specific. For questions regarding transfer requirements, please contact the Assistant Athletic Director for Compliance and Academics. Individuals that do not meet these deadlines/windows would sit a year in residence at their new institution, unless granted an NCAA waiver.

If you have specific questions on transfer options and exceptions, please contact the Assistant Athletic Director for Compliance and Academics.

XVII. STUDENT-ATHLETE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAAC)

The Student-athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) is a student-athlete leadership group comprised of members of HCU's athletic teams. The purpose of SAAC is to represent the diverse interests of student-athletes to the HCU University's Athletics Administration; to promote community among all HCU student-athletes; to foster commitment to service; and to represent the HCU Athletics Program locally and at the conference and national levels. Members of SAAC develop their leadership and citizenship skills by promoting student-athlete welfare issues and actively participating in departmental educational programs and special events. Our committee will be guided by the following principles: Ethics, Integrity, Fairness, and Respect for Diversity.

Division I SAAC Mission Statement

The mission of the NCAA Division I Student-Athlete Advisory Committee is to enhance the total student-athlete experience by promoting opportunity, protecting student-athlete well-being, and fostering a positive student-athlete image.

For more information on the NCAA Division Student-Athlete Advisory Committees, please visit the NCAA website:

<https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2013/11/18/division-i-student-athlete-advisory-committee.aspx>.

How Can HCU Student-Athletes Get Involved with the SAAC?

HCU student-athletes are encouraged to ask their coach about involvement with the SAAC or contact the Office of Compliance and Academics.

Purpose and Function of a SAAC

SAAC is a committee made up of student-athletes assembled to provide insight on the student-athlete experience. The SAAC also offers input on the rules, regulations and policies that affect student-athletes' lives on NCAA member institution campuses. Areas of concern include but are not limited to financial aid, transfer rules, Title IX issues, budgets, and playing and practice limits. The campus committee is meant to serve as a local student-athlete voice in addressing issues of student-athlete welfare at their respective institution. In addition, members have the opportunity to offer input on issues that may be national in scope.

SAAC functions include:

1. Promote communication between athletics administration and student-athletes;

2. Provide feedback into athletics department issues;
3. Build a sense of community within the athletics program involving all teams;
4. Organize community service efforts;
5. Create a vehicle for student-athlete representation on campus-wide committees;
6. Promote a positive student-athlete image on campus.

The following representatives are members of the SAAC committee and have voting rights.

Men’s Sports

- Baseball
- Basketball
- Cross Country
- Football
- Golf
- Soccer
- Track & Field (Indoor and Outdoor)

Women’s Sports

- Basketball
- Beach Volleyball
- Golf
- Cross Country
- Soccer
- Softball
- Volleyball
- Track & Field (Indoor and Outdoor)

In addition, ex-officio members, the athletic department liaison, and the Director of Athletics have voting rights.

HCU Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) Governing Principles

Article I - Mission Statement:

The HCU Student-Athlete Advisory Committee’s purpose is to provide a vehicle that promotes communication between student-athletes and the athletics administration, between each athletic team in the department and within the university campus student body and faculty. It will seek to improve the environment of the student-athletes, portraying a positive student-athlete image among students, faculty and the community.

Article II - Composition:

The SAAC committee members will be chosen by the coach and the existing member of the team’s representative on the committee. The committee feels it is important, but not imperative that members of the committee be represented by student-athletes from each classification, from sophomore and above, trying to avoid placing freshmen on the committee, unless it is unavoidable. The number of representatives per team will be based on the total number of individuals on the team.

Minimum representation ratio is 1:15

Election of a President and Vice President.

Committee secretary and treasurer will also be appointed and voted on by the members, as necessary.

Elections will be conducted at the end of each spring semester for all leadership positions.

Article III - Meetings:

Meetings will take place once a month at a minimum and more if need be. A schedule of meeting times will be decided and voted on at the first meeting of each semester. Meetings take place during the fall and spring semesters only.

Article IV - Absentee Policy:

Individual members of the SAAC committee cannot miss more than two meetings during the course of the year, unless excused for academic or athletic reasons. Those who miss more than the allotted times will risk being replaced on the committee.

Article V - Projects:

The committee feels it is important to provide community service projects for each individual team as well as one per semester as a whole athletic department.

Article VI - Role:

The SAAC is an advisory committee in nature and may recommend policy to the Athletic Administration when appropriate. In order to make formal recommendations a motion must be made, seconded and approved by at least a 3/4 majority of those members present.

XVIII. PUBLIC RELATIONS

One of the most effective public relations tools available to a university is its athletic department. No other section of the university generates as much ongoing public interest and comment as its athletic teams, coaches and individual student-athletes. When positive things happen to our teams, a positive identity is created for our school.

Definition

Good public relations transcends good media relations. That is only a fraction of what we hope to achieve. Rather, good public relations begin with good personal relations, be it with fellow students, professors, coaches and other athletic staff members, or teammates. Relationships with these “publics” can be an initial step in determining the degree of a student-athletes’ future success. Student-athletes are now, and forever, identified as an HCU Student-Athlete. That label is an integral part of the student-athlete, beginning here on campus and extending on in to professional and personal lives thereafter.

Media Relations

Beyond the immediate university community, student-athletes and their coaches are among the most visible representatives of the university. The reason is that student-athletes' accomplishments, both good and bad, are reported regularly in the media. Successes and failures are constantly in the public eye, and how well individuals respond to media interest results directly in a public perception of HCU, its athletic programs and the individual student-athlete. The sports media has expanded tremendously and HCU will have more opportunities to showcase its programs broadcast, especially with the growth of ESPN+.

To say television and the internet have changed the role of media and how they cover sports is an understatement. Where the public once read the newspaper to find out what happened, fans already know the score since they watched an event on television, via streaming or read about in on the internet and/or social media. A newspaper story must now supply information beyond the score, details and statistics. As a result, student-athletes have more demand on their time for personal interviews with reporters. This more personal approach to journalism works to the advantage of HCU. The ability to communicate then becomes a major plus for the image of the university, the athletic department, and the student-athlete.

Guidelines

The special time demands placed upon students at HCU, especially athletes demand that general guidelines be laid out. There may also be specific guidelines relevant to individual sports, and those may be discussed by coaches in team meetings or within team rules.

- 1) No interviews can be given by student-athletes to any media, including campus media, unless it is first cleared through the Athletic Media Relations Office.
- 2) The personal phone numbers of student-athletes will not be published or generally distributed to the media. A reporter may ask for a student-athlete to call or for their phone number, then media relations will contact the student-athlete and request permission before responding to the request.
- 3) No interviews will be scheduled on the day of an athletic contest prior to participation. Following the contest, student-athletes may be asked for comments on individual and team performance.
- 4) Be positive and supportive of teammates, coaches and the university. Everyone in the department is making every effort possible to improve the performances and results of all our student-athletes and teams.
- 5) Remember that student-athletes represent HCU at all times. An individual's actions will always reflect on the university, team, coaches and family.

XIX. INTERNET SOCIAL NETWORKING COMMUNITY SITES

Internet sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Tik Tok etc. provide individuals with an opportunity to interact with an extraordinarily expansive universe of new people and connect with current friends. Postings on personal profiles, groups and chat rooms are in the public domain and easily accessible by anyone, including reporters, parents, coaches, boosters, groupies, predators, employers and graduate school admissions officials. Even if intended to be seen by a private audience, information can be shared by those who access the page without the poster's knowledge or consent. Once information is posted, it can be retrieved by computer savvy individuals even after it has been deleted.

This has become a problem for student-athletes across the country. In some instances, student-athletes have posted inappropriate photographs and other content that ultimately led to disciplinary action against them, including dismissal from their team or school. Also, fans of opposing teams have downloaded information and used it to taunt or humiliate the athlete during a contest. In addition, the media may have been made aware of information posted on these sites and use it to scrutinize a student-athlete's behavior. Web sites of this nature also have been used by boosters at some schools which has led to improper contact by the boosters and ultimately cost the student-athlete his/her eligibility.

Guidelines

The following guidelines are intended to provide the framework for student-athletes to conduct themselves safely and responsibly in an online environment. As a student-athlete at HCU you should:

1. Be careful with how much and what kind of identifying information you post on social network sites. It is unwise to make available information such as full date of birth, social security number, address, on campus room number, phone number, class schedules, bank account information, or details about your daily routine. All can facilitate identity theft or stalking. Sites provide numerous privacy settings for information contained in its pages; use these settings to protect private information.
2. Be aware that potential current and future employers often access information you place on online social network sites. You should think about any information you post or tweet potentially providing an image of you to a prospective employer. The information posted is considered public information. Protect yourself by maintaining a self-image that you can be proud of several years from now.
3. Do not respond to unsolicited e-mails asking for passwords, PIN numbers, or other sensitive information. Reputable businesses and persons do not ask for this information in e-mails.
4. Be sure to not have a false sense of security about your rights to freedom of speech. Understand that freedom of speech is not unlimited. Social network sites are not a place where you can say and do whatever you want without repercussions. Other content like texts or emails while not intended to be posted for public view can find their way online for all to see.
5. Do not publicize recruitment of PSA's, including making any comment or reference to a PSA's visit or commitment to HCU. Any current student-athlete who makes a public comment about a PSA's recruitment has committed an NCAA violation and subjects that student-athlete, his or her team, and the PSA to NCAA penalties.

Prohibited Conduct

Student-athletes are highly visible representatives of the university and are expected to uphold the values and responsibilities of the University while meeting all requirements set forth by the conference, NCAA, HCU, and the University's athletics department. The HCU Department of Athletics prohibits malicious and reckless behavior when utilizing public media outlets. It is important that student-athletes recognize the power of public media domains and the potentially negative image that they can portray about student-athletes, coaches, the athletics program, and the university.

The malicious use of online social networks or any public media domain shall not be tolerated by the HCU Department of Athletics and may result in disciplinary action. Such malicious uses include, but are not limited to:

1. Derogatory language and remarks about student-athletes or coaches; student-athletes, coaches, athletics administrators or representatives of other universities or colleges; HCU faculty or staff; or other athletics officials, administrators, or representatives.
2. Demeaning statements about or threats to any third party.
3. Incriminating photos or statements depicting violence, hazing, sexual harassment, vandalism, stalking, underage drinking, selling, possessing, or using controlled substances; or any other inappropriate behaviors.
4. Creating a serious danger to the safety of another person or making a credible threat of serious physical or emotional injury to another person.
5. Indicating knowledge of an unreported felony theft or felony criminal damage to property.
6. Indicating knowledge of an unreported NCAA violation regardless if the violation was unintentional or intentional.

If a student-athlete is found to be inappropriately using an online social network, he or she will be in direct violation of this policy and subject to the appropriate sanctions administered by the university or the Athletics Department. The following sanctions and appeals procedures apply:

Sanctions

Any activity or language in violation of the above prohibitions, including first time offenses, is subject to investigation and possible sanction by HCU and/or the Athletics Department, as well as civil authorities. Sanctions imposed by the Director of Athletics on student-athletes may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Written notification from the Director of Athletics to the student-athlete outlining the policy and requiring that the unacceptable content be removed or the social network account be deactivated. Temporary suspension from the team until prescribed conditions are met.
- Counseling and/or education on social media use.
- Suspension from the team for a prescribed period.
- Indefinite suspension from the team.
- Dismissal from the team.
- Non-renewal of athletic grant-in-aid.

Teams may institute their own, stricter policies at their discretion.

Appeals

A student-athlete may appeal suspension/dismissal from the team or non-renewal of Grant-in-Aid. For these sanctions, the Director of Athletics will give notice in writing of the sanction, of the student-athlete's right to appeal, and of the prescribed appeal process.

XX. HC-YOU: NAME, IMAGE AND LIKENESS

Effective July 1, 2021, the State of Texas through S.B. No. 1385 permits student-athletes to receive compensation for use of their name, image, and/or likeness in some situations. NIL legislation in the State of Texas was updated effective July 1, 2023, through H.B. 2804. The legislation requires the student-athlete to disclose in advance to the institution any proposed contracts/situations where the name, image, and/or likeness of the student-athlete may be used. All potential NIL agreements **must** be disclosed to the compliance office via Front Rush. The institution would then either approve, disclose the conflict which would make the proposed contract/situation impermissible, or request additional information. Questions regarding NIL and/or the permitted use of a students' name, image and/or likeness should be directed to the compliance office.

Updated effective July 1, 2023, Texas' NIL bill allows use of institutional property, apparel, logos, marks, etc., which can now be used permissibly with advanced authorized approval from the university. Please check with the Assistant Athletic Director for Compliance and Academics for approval. Texas bill requires all student-athletes complete a minimum five (5) hours of financial literacy education their first year of enrollment at HCU.

INFLCR

HCU and the Southland Conference have partnered with INFLCR, one of the leading content and compliance software platforms in college athletics. The main solutions INFLCR provides are brand-building tools, compliance assistance, and monetization opportunities for NIL. At the beginning of the academic year, each student-athlete will be sent an email from INFLCR to sign up for the platform, which is completely free to use. This will allow student-athletes access to all visual content (photos and videos) for their sport uploaded by the Athletics Media Relations Office to share on social media accounts, with family, or for potential NIL opportunities.

If you have any questions about INFLCR, please contact the Athletics Media Relations Office.

NOCAP Sports

HCU has partnered with NOCAP Sports, an NLI software that allow “every athlete, regardless of school, sport, level and background...equal access to the best technology, resources, and endorsement opportunities to succeed in the new NIL era.” The platform is intended to bridge the gap “between athletes, agents, brands and fans by offering the most comprehensive free to use and school name, image, and likeness solution in the market.”

For more information regarding the HCU Name, Image and Likeness Program, in partnership with NOCAP Sports, please visit the compliance website [here](#).

XXI. COUNTABLE ATHLETICALLY RELATED ACTIVITIES

Countable Athletically Related Activities (or CARA) include all required team practice, contests, meetings, and other mandatory athletic events. CARA do not include academic or compliance meetings, voluntary activities initiated by a student-athlete, time in the training room, team travel, etc.

During the in-season period (i.e., championship and non-championship segments), a student-athlete may participate in a maximum of 20 hours per week of CARA, no more than four hours per day, with at least one day off. There are no CARA limits during official vacation periods while a team is in-season. In the off-season a student-athlete may participate in a maximum of 8 hours of CARA per week with at least two days off. In sports other than football, no more than four of the eight hours per week may be spent on skill-related workouts. In football, the eight hours of CARA should be limited to weight training, conditioning with no more than two hours of film review, and walk-throughs.

Coaches are required to turn in practice logs (or CARA logs) to the Compliance Office every week during the academic year. During the summer, current NCAA legislation permits limited summer athletic activities for football, men’s basketball and women’s basketball and practice logs are required in the applicable summer weeks as well. The team’s designated coach and head coach must both sign and verify the accuracy of the hours listed on these logs, with the team’s Student-athlete Advisor Committee representative(s) and a rotating selection of other student-athletes confirming the information.

The Compliance Office will review each CARA log once it is submitted and ensure that all hours recorded are in compliance with NCAA regulations. All applicable NCAA legislation applies to countable athletically related activity limits. All student-athletes, whether they sign the CARA log or not, are empowered to ask questions about the activities and the time spent each week in required team activities. Student-athletes may address issues directly with coaches, their SAAC representatives, or the Compliance and Academics Office.

XXII. COMPLIMENTARY ADMISSIONS POLICY – FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES COMPETING IN A TICKETED EVENT

The following NCAA Bylaws govern complimentary admissions for student-athletes.

Complimentary Admissions. Complimentary admissions shall be provided only through a pass list for individuals designated by the student-athlete. “Hard tickets” shall not be issued. The institution shall be responsible for this administrative procedure, and the

student-athlete's eligibility shall be affected by involvement in action contrary to provisions of 16.2.1.1 (Institutional Events in the Student-Athlete's Sport - An institution may provide four complimentary admissions per home or away intercollegiate athletics event to a student-athlete in the sport in which the individual participates, either practices or competes, regardless of whether the student-athlete competes in the contest), and 16.2.2.1 (Sale of Complimentary Admissions - A student-athlete may not receive payment from any source for his or her complimentary admissions and may not exchange or assign them for any item of value.).

Issuance Procedures. The individual utilizing the complimentary admission must present identification to the person supervising the use of the pass list at the admission gate. The individual then shall be provided a ticket stub or other identification of a specified reserved seat or seating area or treated as a general-admission ticket holder.

To attend on-campus athletic events for a sport a student-athlete is not participating in, present a HCU Student ID at the designated student entrance. Without a HCU Student ID, student-athletes not competing will not be admitted. Please contact your coach or the Director of Ticketing with any questions regarding complimentary admission policies and procedures.

XXIII. STUDENT-ATHLETE OUTSIDE COMPETITION POLICY

Anyone interested in competing on an outside team at any time must receive permission from the compliance department (available online through Front Rush). The form must be completed and submitted to the compliance department prior to competing with any outside team. The compliance office will review the request and has the responsibility to confirm participation complies with NCAA regulations regarding expenses received, amateurism, and other applicable rules and may contact the team coach or coordinator. Student-athletes should not engage in any activities or receive any expenses/awards from any outside team without prior approval from the compliance department. Approval by the compliance department will help ensure collegiate eligibility is maintained.

Bylaws that govern outside competition include:

17.02.11 Outside Competition

Outside competition is athletics competition against any other athletics team (including an alumni team) that does not represent the intercollegiate athletics program of the same institution.

17.02.12 Outside Team

An outside team is any team that does not represent the intercollegiate athletics program of the member institution or a team that includes individuals other than eligible student-athletes of the member institution (e.g., members of the coaching staff, ineligible student-athletes, members of the faculty).

XXIV. EXIT INTERVIEW POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Student-athletes who are graduating from HCU will be asked to participate in an exit interview and/or exit survey during their final semester at the University. The interview and survey will be conducted by a faculty member chosen by the President who is not a member of the athletic department. This faculty member is usually the person designated as the Athletics Certification Officer. The survey will cover various aspects of life as an athlete at HCU.

XXV. AMATEUR STATUS/PROFESSIONAL STATUS

Student-athlete involvement with agents, those acting as agents, or anyone associated with an agency relationship is governed by NCAA, federal, and state law. If there are any questions regarding agents and preserving eligibility, or if an agent need information on how to get certified, contact Andrew Hoffman at ahoffman@HBU.edu or 281-649-3342.

A. NCAA Regulations

Professional Draft and Tryouts

1. **Inquiry.** An individual may inquire about eligibility for a professional-league player draft without affecting his or her amateur status.

2. **Draft List.** An individual loses amateur status in a particular sport when the individual asks to be placed on the draft list or supplemental draft list of a professional league in that sport, even though:

- a. The individual asks that his or her name be withdrawn from the draft list prior to the actual draft.
- b. The individual's name remains on the list but he or she is not drafted; or
- c. The individual is drafted but does not sign an agreement with any professional athletics team.

3. Exceptions –

12.2.4.2.1.1: National Basketball Association. In men's basketball, an enrolled student-athlete may enter the National Basketball Association's draft each year during his collegiate participation without jeopardizing eligibility in that sport, provided: a) the student-athlete requests an evaluation from the National Basketball Association's Undergraduate Advisory Committee before entering the draft; b) the student-athlete requests that his name be removed from the draft list and declares his intent to resume intercollegiate participation not later than 10 days after the conclusion of the NBA draft combine; c) the student-athlete's declaration of intent is submitted in writing to the institution's director of athletics; and d) the student-athlete is not drafted.

12.2.4.2.1.2: Professional League Other Than the National Basketball Association. In men's basketball, an enrolled student-athlete may enter a professional league's draft (other than National Basketball Association's draft) each year during his collegiate career without jeopardizing eligibility in the sport, provided: a) the student-athlete requests that his name be removed from the draft list and declares his intent to resume intercollegiate participation not later than 10 days after the conclusion of the professional league's draft combine. In the professional league does not conduct a draft combine, the student-athlete must request that his name be removed from the draft list not later than the end of the day before the first day of the spring National Letter of Intent signing period for the applicable year; b) the student-athlete's declaration of intent is submitted in writing to the institution's director of athletics; and c) the student-athlete is not drafted.

12.2.4.2.2: Basketball- Two-Year College Prospective Student-Athlete. A prospective student-athlete enrolled at a two-year collegiate institution in basketball may enter a professional league's draft one time during his or her collegiate career without jeopardizing eligibility in that sport, provided the prospective student-athlete is not drafted by any team in that league.

12.2.4.2.3: Women's Basketball- Four-Year College Student-Athlete. In women's basketball, an enrolled student-athlete may enter a professional league's draft one time during her collegiate career without jeopardizing eligibility in that sport, provided the student-athlete is not drafted by any team in that league and the student-athlete declares her intention to resume intercollegiate participation within 30 days after the draft. The student-athlete's declaration of intent shall be in writing to the institutions' director of athletics.

12.2.4.2.4: Football. In football, an enrolled student-athlete (As opposed to a prospective student-athlete) may enter the National Football League draft one time during his collegiate career without jeopardizing eligibility in that sport, provided the student-athlete is not drafted by any team in that league and the student-athlete declares his intention to resume intercollegiate participation within 72 hours following the National Football League draft declaration date. The student-athlete's declaration of intent shall be in writing to the institution's director of athletics.

12.2.2.4.2.5: Sports Other Than Basketball and Football. An enrolled student-athlete in a sport other than basketball or football may enter a professional league's draft one time during his or her collegiate career without jeopardizing his or her eligibility in the applicable sport, provided the student-athlete is not drafted and within 72 hours following the draft, he or she declares his or her intention to resume participation in intercollegiate athletics. The student-athlete's declaration of intent shall be in writing to the institution's director of athletics.

4. **Tryout Prior to Enrollment.** In sports other than men's ice hockey and skiing, prior to initial full-time collegiate enrollment, an individual may participate in a tryout with a professional team or league, provided not more than actual and necessary expenses is received to participate.

5. **Tryout After Enrollment.** A student-athlete shall not try out with a professional athletics team in a sport or permit a professional athletics team to conduct medical examinations during any part of the academic year (i.e., from the beginning of the fall term through completion of the spring term, including any intervening vacation period) while enrolled in a collegiate institution as a regular student in at least a minimum full-time academic load, unless the student-athlete has exhausted eligibility in that sport. The student-athlete may try out with a professional organization in a sport during the summer or during the academic year while not a full-time student, provided the student-athlete does not receive any form of expenses or other compensation from the professional organization.

a. **Outside Competition/Professional Tryout.** A Division I student-athlete with remaining eligibility may compete on an outside team or tryout with a professional team at his or her own expense at the conclusion of the student-athlete's academic year (i.e., the student-athlete's last examination of the spring term, as opposed to the institution's last examination day).

6. **Outside Competition Prohibited.** During a tryout, an individual may not take part in any outside competition (games or scrimmages) as a representative of a professional team.

7. **Timing and Testing of Student-Athletes.** It would be permissible for a member institution to notify a professional organization of the date on which the timing and testing of student-athletes (as part of the regular practice session, physical education/fitness class, or off-season conditioning program session) is to be conducted. It is not permissible for a professional sports organization to assist in the planning or conduct of these sessions; also, a coach may not test only a select group of student-athletes during these sessions. Further, it is not permissible for a member institution to set aside a day prior to the beginning of spring practice to be used as a professional timing and testing day, in as much as such an arrangement would be contrary to out-of-season practice regulations and would constitute an impermissible tryout for student-athletes who have remaining eligibility.

B. FEDERAL ATHLETE AGENT ACT - SPORTS AGENT RESPONSIBILITY AND TRUST ACT OF 2004

§7801. Definitions

As used in this Act, the following definitions apply:

- 1- **AGENCY CONTRACT** – The term “agency contract” means an oral or written agreement in which a student-athlete authorizes a person to negotiate or solicit on behalf of the student-athlete a professional sports contract or an endorsement contract.
- 2- **ATHLETE AGENT** – The term “athlete agent” means an individual who enters into an agency contract with a student-athlete, or directly or indirectly recruits or solicits a student-athlete to enter into an agency contract and does not include a spouse, parent, sibling, grandparent, or guardian of such student-athlete, any legal counsel for purposes other than that of representative agency, or an individual acting solely on behalf of a professional sports team or professional sports organization.
- 3- **ATHLETIC DIRECTOR** – The term “athletic director” means an individual responsible for administering the athletic program of an educational institution or, in the case that such program is administered separately, the athletic program for male students or the athletic program for female students, as appropriate.
- 4- **COMMISSION** – The term “commission” means the Federal Trade Commission.
- 5- **ENDORSEMENT CONTRACT** – The term “endorsement contract” means an agreement under which a student-athlete is employed or receives consideration for the use by the other party of that individual's person, name, image, or likeness in the promotion of any product, service, or event.
- 6- **INTERCOLLEGIATE SPORT** – The term “intercollegiate sport” means a sport played at the collegiate level for which eligibility requirements for participation by a student-athlete are established by a national association for the promotion or regulation of college athletics.
- 7- **PROFESSIONAL SPORTS CONTRACT** – The term “professional sports contract” means an agreement under which an individual is employed, or agrees to render services, as a player on a professional sports team, with a professional sports organization, or as a professional athlete.
- 8- **STATE** – The term “State” includes a State of the United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, or any territory or insular possession subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.

- 9- **STUDENT-ATHLETE** – The term “student-athlete” means an individual who engages in, is eligible to engage in, or may be eligible in the future to engage in, any intercollegiate sport. An individual who is permanently ineligible to participate in a particular intercollegiate sport is not a student-athlete for purposes of that sport.

§7802. Regulation of Unfair and Deceptive Acts and Practices in Connection with the Contact between an Athlete Agent and Student-Athlete

a. CONDUCT PROHIBITED – It is unlawful for an athlete agent to –

- (1) Directly or indirectly recruit or solicit a student-athlete to enter into an agency contract, by –
 - (a) Giving any false or misleading information or making a false promise or representation; or
 - (b) Providing anything of value to a student-athlete or anyone associated with the student-athlete before the student-athlete enters into an agency contract, including any consideration in the form of a loan, or acting in the capacity of a guarantor or co-guarantor for any debt;
- (2) Enter into an agency contract with a student-athlete without providing the student-athlete with the disclosure document described in subsection (b); or
- (3) Predate or postdate an agency contract.

b. REQUIRED DISCLOSURE BY ATHLETE AGENTS TO STUDENT-ATHLETES

(1) IN GENERAL – In conjunction with the entering into of an agency contract, an athlete agent shall provide to the student-athlete, or, if the student-athlete is under the age of 18, to such student-athlete’s parent or legal guardian, a disclosure document that meets the requirements of this subsection. Such disclosure document is separate from and in addition to any disclosure which may be required under State law.

(2) SIGNATURE OF STUDENT-ATHLETE – The disclosure document must be signed by the student-athlete, or, if the student-athlete is under the age of 18, by such student-athlete’s parent or legal guardian, prior to entering into the agency contract.

(3) REQUIRED LANGUAGE – The disclosure document must contain, in close proximity to the signature of the student-athlete, or if the student-athlete is under the age of 18, the signature of such student-athlete’s parent or legal guardian, a conspicuous notice in boldface type stating: “Warning to Student-Athlete: If you agree orally or in writing to be represented by an agent now or in the future you may lose your eligibility to compete as a student-athlete in your sport. Within 72 hours after entering into this contract or before the next athletic event in which you are eligible to participate, whichever occurs first, both you and the agent by whom you are agreeing to be represented must notify the athletic director of the educational institution at which you are enrolled, or other individual responsible for athletic programs at such educational institution, that you have entered into an agency contract.”

§7803. Enforcement

- a. **UNFAIR OR DECEPTIVE ACT OR PRACTICE** – A violation of this Act shall be treated as a violation of a rule defining an unfair or deceptive act or practice prescribed under section 18(a)(1)(B) of the Federal Trade Commission Act (15 U.S.C. 57a(a)(1)(B)).
- b. **ACTIONS BY THE COMMISSION** – The Commission shall enforce this chapter in the same manner, by the same means, and with the same jurisdiction, powers, and duties as though all applicable terms and provisions of the Federal Trade Commission Act (15 U.S.C. 41 et seq.) were incorporated into and made a part of this chapter.

§7804. Actions by the States

a. IN GENERAL –

1. **CIVIL ACTIONS** – In any case in which the attorney general of a State has reason to believe that an interest of the residents of that State has been or is threatened or adversely affected by the engagement of any athlete agent in a practice that violates section 3 of this Act, the State may bring a civil action on behalf of the residents of the State in a district court of the United States of appropriate jurisdiction to –

- (a) enjoin that practice;
- (b) enforce compliance with this Act; or

(c) obtain damage, restitution, or other compensation on behalf of residents of the State.

2. NOTICE –

(a) **In General:** Before filing an action under paragraph (1), the attorney general of the State involves shall provide to the Commission –

- (i) written notice of that action; and
- (ii) a copy of the complaint for that action.

(b) **Exemption:** Subparagraph (A) shall not apply with respect to the filing of an action by an attorney general of a State under this subsection, if the attorney general determines that it is not feasible to provide the notice described in that subparagraph before filing of the action. In such case, the attorney general of a State shall provide notice and a copy of the complaint to the Commission at the same time as the attorney general files the action.

c. INTERVENTION –

- a. **IN GENERAL** – On receiving notice under subsection (a)(2), the Commission shall have the right to intervene in the action that is the subject of the notice.
- b. **EFFECT OF INTERVENTION** – If the Commission intervenes in an action under subsection (a), it shall have the right –
 - i. To be heard with respect to any matter that arises in that action; and
 - ii. To file a petition for appeal
- c. **CONSTRUCTION** – For purposes of bringing any civil action under subsection (a), nothing in this chapter shall be construed to prevent an attorney general of a State from exercising the powers conferred on the attorney general by the laws of the state to-
 - (1) Conduct investigations;
 - (2) Administer oaths or affirmations; or
 - (3) Compel the attendance of witnesses or the production of documentary and other evidence
- d. **ACTIONS BY THE COMMISSION** – In any case in which an action is instituted by or on behalf of the Commission for a violation of section 7802 of this title, no State may, during the pendency of that action, institute an action under subsection (a) against any defendant names in the complaint in that action.
- e. **VENUE** – Any action brought under subsection (a) may be brought in the district court of the United States that meets applicable requirements relating to venue under section 1391 of title 28.
- f. **SERVICE OF PROCESS** – In an action brought under subsection (a), process may be served in any district in which the defendant –
 - i. Is an inhabitant; or
 - ii. May be found.

§7805. Protection of Educational Institution

a. **NOTICE REQUIRED** – Within 72 hours after entering into an agency contract or before the next athletic event in which the student-athlete may participate, whichever occurs first, the athlete agent and the student-athlete shall each inform the athletic director of the educational institution at which the student-athlete is enrolled, or other individual responsible for athletic programs at such educational institution, that the student-athlete has entered into an agency contract, and the athlete agent shall provide the athletic director with notice in writing of such a contract.

b. CIVIL REMEDY

(1) **IN GENERAL** – An educational institution has a right of action against an athlete agent for damages caused by a violation of this Act.

(2) **DAMAGES** – Damages of an educational institution may include and are limited to actual losses and expenses incurred because, as a result of the conduct of the athlete agent, the educational institution was injured by a violation of this Act or was penalized, disqualified, or suspended from participation in athletics by a national association for the promotion and regulation of athletics, by an athletic conference, or by reasonable, self-imposed disciplinary action taken to mitigate actions likely to be imposed by such an association or conference.

(3) **COSTS AND ATTORNEYS FEES** – In an action taken under this section, the court may award to the prevailing party

costs and reasonable attorney fees.

(4) **EFFECT ON OTHER RIGHTS, REMEDIES, AND DEFENSES** – This section does not restrict the rights, remedies, or defenses of any person under law or equity.

§7806. Limitation – Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to prohibit an individual from seeking any remedies available under existing Federal or State law or equity.

§7807. Sense of Congress – It is the sense of Congress that States should enact the Uniform Athlete Agents Act of 2000 drafted by the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws, to protect student-athletes and the integrity of amateur sports from unscrupulous sports agents. In particular, it is the sense of Congress that States should enact the provisions relating to the registration of sports agents, the required form of contract, the right of the student-athlete to cancel an agency contract, the disclosure requirements relating to record maintenance, reporting, renewal, notice, warning, and security, and the provisions for reciprocity amount the States.

C. TEXAS ATHLETE AGENT ACT

The passage of Senate Bill 20 by the 70th Legislature created the Athlete Agent Act. This act was enacted in 1987 with the last amendment occurring in 2011. The purpose of the Act is to regulate the relationship between an athlete and that person who would act as his/her agent. Further, the Act provides that notice shall be given to the institution of any such relationship formed between an agent and an athlete.

Applicable Definitions

- **Athlete Agent** – An individual who, for compensation directly or indirectly recruits or solicits an athlete to enter into an agent contact, professional sports services contract or financial services contract, with that individual, or another people; or that for a fee, procures, offers, promises, or attempts to obtain employment for an athlete with a professional sports team.
- **Agent Contract** - Any contract or agreement under which an athlete authorizes an athlete agent to negotiate or to solicit on behalf of the athlete with one or more professional sports teams for the employment of the athlete by one or more professional sports team.
- **Financial Services Contract** - Any contract or agreement under which an athlete authorizes an athlete agent to provide financial services for the athlete, including the making and execution of investment and other financial decisions by the agent on behalf of the athlete.
- **Personal Services Contract** - Execution by an athlete of a personal service contract with the owner or prospective owner of a professional sports team for the purpose of future athletic services is equivalent to employment with a professional sports team.

Registration with the State of Texas

An athlete agent must register with the Secretary of State before the agent may contact an athlete, either directly or indirectly, or enter into a contract with an athlete. This certificate of registration is good for only one year and must be applied for every year along with a \$1,000 registration fee.

Before the issuance or renewal of a certificate of registration, an athlete agent must deposit with the Secretary of State a surety bond in the sum of \$100,000. An athlete agent that enters into an agent contract only is not required to meet the bond requirements. The bond is in favor of the state for the benefit of an athlete who is damaged and must be obtained from a company authorized to do business as a surety of Texas. The recovery of damages is not limited to the amount of the bond.

Areas of Governance by the Athlete Act

Contract - The following regulations govern what must be contained in a contract.

- 1) Each contract must state the fees and percentages to be paid to the athlete agent.
- 2) Each registered athlete agent shall file with the Secretary of State a copy of each agent contract and financial services

contract. Each contract must be on a form approved by the Secretary of State.

3) If the athlete is a student at an institution of higher education, the athlete agent must file a copy of the contract no later than the fifth day after which the athlete signs the contract with the athletic director of the institution.

4) The student-athlete may rescind the contract by written notification to the athlete agent by the 16th day after the date of the contract was signed.

Contact - An athlete agent may contact an athlete only as provided by this act.

1) The athlete agent may send an athlete written materials relating to the professional credentials of the agent or to specific services offered by the agent, if the agent simultaneously sends an identical copy of the written materials to the athletic director of the institution of higher education in which the athlete is enrolled as a student or to the athletic director's designee, in the case of HCU this would be the Assistant Athletic Director for Compliance and Academics.

2) The athlete or the athlete's parents or legal guardians may initiate contact with the athlete agent to arrange an interview to determine the agent's professional proficiency in the representation of an athlete, in the marketing of the athlete's athletic ability or reputation, or the provision of financial services by the agent on behalf of the athlete.

3) The athlete agent may not discuss the agent's services with an athlete or the athlete's parents or legal guardians until after the athlete has given notice of the proposed discussion to the HCU compliance director.

4) The Texas Athlete Agent Act requires each institution to designate a period not to exceed 30 consecutive business days to schedule student-athlete/agent interviews. HCU has designated a period during the spring term for such interviews, this period generally corresponding with the first two weeks of classes for the spring semester. After being contacted by either the agent or the athlete about a potential meeting, the HCU compliance director will arrange the date, time and location for such meeting. All meetings will take place in the presence of a third-party designated by HCU

Prohibited Acts - An athlete agent may not do any of the following.

1) Publish or cause to be published any false, fraudulent, or misleading information, representation, notice, or advertisement or give any false information or make any false promises or presentations concerning any employment to any person.

2) Divide fees with or receive compensation from a person exempt under this act or a professional sports league or franchise or its representative or employee.

3) Offer anything of value (i.e. any form of transportation) to induce the athlete to enter into an agreement by which the athlete agent will represent the athlete.

4) Enter into an agreement, written or oral, by which the athlete agent offers anything in return for the referral of any clients by that employee.

5) Except as otherwise provided by this act, directly contact an athlete who is participating in football or basketball until after completion of the athlete's last intercollegiate contest and may not enter into an oral or written agreement that the athlete agent will represent the athlete before the athlete's last intercollegiate contest.

Civil Penalties

1) An athlete agent who violates the Act may be assessed a civil penalty by the Secretary of State not to exceed \$50,000.

2) An athlete agent who violates this act may be subject to forfeiture of any right of repayment for anything of value received by an athlete as an inducement to enter into any contract and a refund of any consideration paid to the athlete agent on the athlete's behalf.

3) An athlete agent may also be subject to reasonable attorney's fees and court costs incurred by an athlete in suing and recovering against an athlete agent.

4) If an athlete agent violates the Act, any contract with an athlete is void.

Criminal Penalty

An athlete agent commits a Class A misdemeanor or a third degree felony if the agent intentionally or knowingly violates the Act or rule adopted under the Act.

XXVI. SPORTS MEDICINE

A. GENERAL MEDICAL POLICY

The Sports Medicine Department is staffed by licensed physicians and athletic trainers who are fully prepared to handle health problems which may arise for the student-athlete. All diagnoses are the responsibility of the Sports Medicine Department. Medical directors have final authority in determining the athlete's status for participation and act in the sole interest of student-athlete health and welfare. The Sports Medicine Department is empowered with unchallengeable, autonomous authority to determine medical management and return-to-play decisions of student-athletes.

B. PERSONNEL

The sports medicine staff is under the direction of Abilash Davlapur, M.D., Vincent Mandola, M.D., Kathy Nguyen M.D., and Vishal Shah, M.D. A medical consultant referral list will be approved by the medical directors. Consultation with physicians not on the referral list must have prior approval of the medical directors. All consultations with physicians must be coordinated with the Sports Medicine staff.

C. PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS

All student-athletes must receive an annual physical exam conducted by the Sports Medicine department prior to their participation as an athlete at HCU. No student-athlete may participate without being cleared by the Sports Medicine Department each year.

D. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

For any injury resulting from supervised intercollegiate activities, the Athletic Department will file first with personal insurance coverage that may already exist on the injured student-athlete; any portion not covered by an existing policy will become the financial responsibility of the department. **The Athletic Department does not assume liability for injuries or illnesses (i.e. automobile accidents, dental care, appendicitis, etc.) not resulting from competition.** The University highly recommends the student-athlete has personal health insurance to cover such health problems. **Should the student-athlete seek medical care other than that which is coordinated through the athletic trainer and authorized in writing, the student will then assume ALL financial responsibility.** Once a student-athlete has sought off-campus medical attention, he/she must have a written release to the Sports Medicine staff from the outside physician before he/she may return to participation. Final return to participation must be approved by the Sports Medicine staff.

E. CARE OF INJURIES

It is the student-athlete's responsibility to report all injuries/illnesses to an athletic trainer as soon as possible. It is also the responsibility of the student-athlete to coordinate all daily treatment and rehabilitation with an athletic trainer.

F. EMERGENCIES

Memorial Hermann Southwest is the primary emergency care center to be utilized by the HCU Athletic Department. All student-athletes should be directed to this facility in cases of extreme emergency. Upon entering the hospital, a student-athlete should identify him/herself as a HCU athlete under the care of Dr. Vishal Shah, Dr. Abhilash Davlapur, Dr. Tu Dan Nguyen, or Dr. Joe Mandola.

G. EYEWEAR POLICY

Student-athletes who enter HCU with corrective eyewear will be responsible for any costs associated with examinations and prescription changes. Student-athletes whose contact lenses are lost or destroyed during official practice or competition will be eligible for reimbursement for replacement costs based on the recommendation of the Sports Medicine Staff.

H. MEDICATION

The University will provide prescription medication to HCU student-athletes only when prescribed by a HCU team physician, and it is related to an athletic injury.

I. NON-ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL POLICY

The Sports Medicine Department will not be available to club sports, intramurals, physical education, or recreational participants, except in emergencies.

J. PRESENT PERSONNEL DURING INJURY/TREATMENT OF A STUDENT-ATHLETE

If a student-athlete is injured or being treated by the HCU sports medicine staff, the only personnel allowed during this time are the following: team physician, athletic trainer, coach, and parents of the student-athlete. The presence of anyone else is not allowed and they will be asked to leave.

XXVII. SICKLE CELL POLICY

Purpose

To provide guidelines for the prevention and treatment of sickle cell illness in collegiate student-athletes at HCU.

Definition of Sickle Cell Trait

Sickle cell trait is the inheritance of one gene for sickle hemoglobin and one for normal hemoglobin. During intense or extensive exertion, the sickle hemoglobin can change the shape of red cells from round to quarter-moon, or “sickle.” This change, exertional sickling, can pose a grave risk for some athletes. During intense exercise sickle cells can “logjam” blood vessels and lead to collapse from ischemic rhabdomyolysis, the rapid breakdown of muscles starved of blood. Major metabolic problems from explosive rhabdomyolysis can be life threatening. Sickling can begin in 2-3 minutes of any all-out exertion – and can reach grave levels soon thereafter if the athlete continues to participate. Heat, dehydration, altitude, and asthma can increase the risk for and worsen sickling, even when exercise is not intense. Collapse resulting from sickling is a medical emergency.

Background Information

The risk of African-Americans having sickle cell trait is 1:2,000 and 1:10,000 for Anglo-Americans. The sickle gene is also present in persons of Mediterranean, Middle Eastern, Indian, Caribbean and South and Central American ancestry; hence, the required screening of all newborns in the United States. The U.S. military tied sickle cell trait to sudden death during recruit basic training. The main cause of death was rhabdomyolysis and the risk of exertional rhabdomyolysis was about 200 times greater for those with sickle cell trait. In sickle cell trait, strenuous exercise evokes four forces that in concert foster sickling: 1) severe hypoxemia, 2) metabolic acidosis; 3) hyperthermia in muscles and 4) red blood cell dehydration. Additional Military research shows that during intense exertion and hypoxemia sickle cells can accumulate in the blood. Recent research also shows that systemic dehydration worsens exertional sickling. The harder and faster athletes go, the earlier and greater the sickling, which explains why collapse occurs “sooner” in high intensity exercise rather than “later” in long duration exercise. Sickling can begin in only 2-3 minutes of sprinting – or in any other all-out exertion – and sickling can quickly increase to grave levels if the stricken athlete continues to struggle with the activity.

Testing

Confirmation of sickle cell trait status should be completed during the athlete’s pre-participation physical examination (PPE) as they enter the HCU athletic department. As all 50 states screen at birth, this marker is a base element of personal health information that will be made readily available to the athlete, the athlete’s parents, and any other healthcare provider the athlete chooses, including those providers designated as team physicians by HCU and those responsible for determination of medical eligibility for participation in athletic competition at HCU.

As of August 1, 2022, the examination or evaluation of student-athletes who are beginning their initial season of eligibility and students who are trying out for a team shall include a sickle cell solubility test, unless documented results of a prior test are provided to the institution. Results for those born in Texas can be found at the following address: <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/lab/patientresults.aspx> and/or by contacting the student-athlete’s primary care physician for documented lab results. Those who do not have proof of a documented test will be subject to the blood draw as directed by the Sports Medicine department of HCU Athletics. Failure to comply may result in non-clearance for athletic participation.

Signs and Symptoms

Sickling collapse has been mistaken for cardiac collapse or heat collapse. But unlike sickling collapse, cardiac collapse tends to be “instantaneous,” has no “cramping” with it, and the athlete with ventricular fibrillation who hits the ground no longer talks. Unlike heat collapse, sickling collapse often occurs within the first half hour on the field, as during the initial sprinting activity. Core temperature is not greatly elevated.

Sickling is often confused with heat cramping but exhibits the following distinctions:

- 1) Heat cramping often has an initial onset of muscle twinges, whereas, sickling has none.
- 2) The pain is different – heat-cramping pain is more excruciating.
- 3) What stops the athlete is different – heat “crampers” hobble to a halt with “locked-up” muscles, while sickling athletes slump to the ground with weak muscles.
- 4) Physical findings are different – heat “crampers” writhe and yell in pain, with muscles contracted; whereas, sicklers lie fairly still, not yelling in pain, with muscles that look and feel normal.
- 5) The response is different – sickling athletes caught early and treated correctly recover faster than players with major heat cramping.

This is not to say that all athletes who sickle present exactly the same way. How they react differs. As the athlete rests, sickle red cells regain oxygen in the lungs and most then revert to normal shape, and the athlete soon feels good again and ready to continue.

Treatment

For the student- athlete with sickle cell trait, the following guidelines should be followed:

- 1) Build up slowly in training with paced progressions, allowing longer periods of rest and recovery between repetitions.
- 2) Encourage participation in preseason strength and conditioning programs to enhance the preparedness of athletes for performance testing which should be sport-specific. Athletes with sickle cell trait should be excluded from participation in performance tests such as mile runs, serial sprints, etc.
- 3) Cessation of activity with onset of symptoms [muscle ‘cramping’, pain, swelling, weakness, tenderness; inability to “catch breath”, fatigue].
- 4) If sickle-trait student-athletes can set their own pace, they seem to do fine.
- 5) All student-athletes should participate in a year-round, periodized strength and conditioning program that is consistent with individual needs, goals, abilities and sport-specific demands. Student-athletes with sickle cell trait who perform repetitive high speed sprints and/or interval training that induces high levels of lactic acid should be allowed extended recovery between repetitions since this type of conditioning poses special risk to these athletes.
- 6) Ambient heat stress, dehydration, asthma, illness, and altitude predispose the athlete with sickle trait to an onset of crisis in physical exertion.
 - a. Adjust work/rest cycles for environmental heat stress
 - b. Emphasize hydration
 - c. Control asthma
 - d. No workout if a student-athlete with sickle trait is ill
 - e. Watch closely the student-athlete with sickle cell trait who is new to altitude. Modify training and have supplemental oxygen available for competitions.
- 7) Educate to create an environment that encourages student-athletes with sickle cell trait to report any symptoms immediately; any signs or symptoms such as fatigue, difficulty breathing, leg or low back pain, or leg or low back cramping in an athlete with sickle cell trait should be assumed to be sickling.

Conclusion

Participation in collegiate athletics at HCU is determined by the medical director(s) in conjunction with the Athletic Training staff. Red blood cells can sickle during intense exertion, blocking blood vessels and posing a grave risk for athletes with sickle cell trait. Screening and simple precautions may prevent deaths and help athletes with sickle cell trait compete in collegiate sports at HCU. Efforts to document newborn screening results should be made during the PPE. In the absence of newborn screening results, testing instructions will be given to the student-athlete by the sports medicine department to determine the presence of sickle cell trait.

The Athletic Training staff at HCU will educate when necessary the staff, coaches and athletes on the potentially lethal nature of this condition.

XXVIII. POLICY ON HEAT EXPOSURE PARTICIPATION

Purpose

It is the policy of the Houston Christian University Department of Athletic Training to provide guidelines for the monitoring of Heat Exposure to HCU student-athletes.

Methodology

The Director of Athletic Training, or his/her designate, will monitor the environmental conditions for all outdoor practices and conditioning sessions. The monitoring will be done by an online weather monitoring service, handheld device, or combination of both. The tool used will be a Wet Bulb Globe Temperature Monitoring device (WBGT). The WBGT device is a tool that measures the ambient air temperature, the relative humidity, wind, and radiant (solar) temperature to monitor all of the environmental conditions affecting athletes during exercise.

Allowing the athletic training staff to establish standard WBGT guidelines and norms for modification of activity (e.g. work: rest ratios, hydration breaks, practice length) will provide limiting exposure to Exertional Heat Stress and Illness. The rise in relative humidity and environmental temperature, dramatically increase the risk for heat exhaustion, cramps, and stroke (see: Policy on Exertional Heat Illness). Research shows that many of the heat related deaths (~65%) in Football have occurred during the month of August. Additionally, over half of the deaths have been during morning practices when the humidity was high, showing the direct correlations between the increased temperature and humidity levels and mortality risk as a result of Exertional Heat Illness.

The WBGT has been the standard since its induction by the United States military in response to the heat casualties during training. In response to this methodology, the US armed forces began making modifications to the conditioning and training sessions to protect against heat illness. In addition to the US Armed Forces, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), also uses WBGT to monitor and regulate work performed by individuals used in outdoor manual labor. The components of WBGT, as previously mentioned, are ambient temperature, relative humidity, wind, and radiant (solar) temperature to get a composite value that can be used. The formula for calculating the WBGT is $WBGT = .7T_w + .2T_g + .1T_d$, where T_w is the wet bulb temperature, which indicates humidity, T_g is the globe temperature, which indicates radiant heat, and T_d is the ambient air (dry) temperature.

Interpretation of Results

If a WBGT monitoring device or weather service cannot be used, the following chart can be used to estimate the WBGT (these estimates use only temperature and relative humidity and account for full sunshine and light wind conditions).

		Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) from Temperature and Relative Humidity																														
		Temperature (°C)																														
Relative Humidity (%)	0	15	16	16	17	18	18	19	19	20	20	21	22	22	23	23	24	24	25	25	26	27	27	28	28	29	29	30	31	31	32	32
	5	16	16	17	18	18	19	19	20	21	21	22	22	23	24	24	25	26	26	27	27	28	29	29	30	31	31	32	33	33	34	35
	10	16	17	17	18	19	19	20	21	21	22	23	23	24	25	25	26	27	27	28	29	30	30	31	32	32	33	34	35	36	36	37
	15	17	17	18	19	19	20	21	21	22	23	24	25	26	26	27	28	29	29	30	31	32	33	33	34	35	36	37	38	39		
	20	17	18	18	19	20	21	21	22	23	24	24	25	26	27	27	28	29	30	31	32	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39			
	25	18	18	19	20	20	21	22	23	24	24	25	26	27	28	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39					
	30	18	19	20	20	21	22	23	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	39							
	35	18	19	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39								
	40	19	20	21	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39									
	45	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	27	28	29	30	32	33	34	35	36	37	38											
	50	20	21	22	23	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	33	34	35	36	37	39												
55	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	34	35	36	37	38														
60	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	35	36	37	38															
65	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	31	32	33	34	36	37	38																
70	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	33	34	35	36	38	39																
75	22	23	24	25	26	27	29	30	31	32	33	35	36	37	39																	
80	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	32	33	34	36	37	38																		
85	23	24	25	26	28	29	30	31	32	34	35	37	38	39																		
90	24	25	26	27	28	29	31	32	33	35	36	37	39																			
95	24	25	26	27	29	30	31	33	34	35	37	38																				
100	24	26	27	28	29	31	32	33	35	36	38	39																				

Note: This table is compiled from an approximate formula which only depends on temperature and humidity. The formula is valid for full sunshine and a light wind

When the WBGT is available, the following guidelines for activity modification and rest breaks have been adopted for athletic programs in schools and universities in the Southeastern region of the United States:

WBGT (°F)	Activity Guidelines and Rest Break Guidelines
<82.0	Normal activities: provide ≥3 separate rest breaks of minimum duration 3 min each during workout.
82.0-86.9	Use discretion for intense or prolonged exercise. Watch at-risk players carefully. Provide ≥3 separate rest breaks of minimum duration 4 min each.
87.0-89.9	Maximum practice time = 2 h. For football: players restricted to helmet, shoulder pads, and shorts during practice. All protective equipment must be removed for conditioning activities. For all sports: provide ≥4 separate rest breaks for minimum duration 4 min each.
90.0-92.0	Maximum length of practice = 1 h. No protective equipment may be worn during practice and there may be no conditioning activities. There must be 20 min of rest breaks provided during the hour of practice.
>92.1	No outdoor workouts, cancel exercise, delay practices until a cooler WBGT reading occurs.

Regional and fitness considerations should be used when applying these guidelines for student-athletes that may be new to this part of the country or deconditioned from injury. Not all athletes handle heat exposure the same and these considerations should be used to advise caution based on the least acclimatized athlete on the team. For example, if the entire men’s soccer team trains in Houston heat all summer long and becomes acclimatized, but a new transfer from Germany arrives at the beginning of pre-season, the mild 90-degree afternoon may be the hottest day he has ever experienced and extreme caution should be advised.

Conclusion

There is more to evaluating the safety of environmental heat stress beyond temperature and humidity (heat index or “feels like” temps). The Wet Bulb Globe Temperature reading takes into account all factors that will affect a student-athlete practicing or conditioning in extreme heat conditions. Using the WBGT will allow the HCU Athletic Training Staff to monitor the environmental risks posed to the student-athletes to allow practices to be scheduled and/or modified with the interest of Student-Athlete Welfare in mind.

XXIX. CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT AND TREATMENT

Definition of Concussion

Concussion is defined as a complex pathophysiological process affecting the brain, induced by traumatic biomechanical forces. Several common features that incorporate clinical, pathologic, and biomechanical injury constructs that may be utilized in defining the nature of a concussive head injury include:

1. Concussion may be caused either by a direct blow to the head, face, neck or elsewhere on the body with an “impulsive” force transmitted to the head.
2. Concussion typically results in the rapid onset of short-lived impairment of neurological function that resolves spontaneously.
3. Concussion may result in neuropathological changes, but the acute clinical symptoms largely reflect a functional disturbance rather than a structural injury.
4. Concussion results in a graded set of clinical symptoms that may or may not involve loss of consciousness. Resolution of the clinical and cognitive symptoms typically follows a sequential course; however, it is important to note that, in a small percentage of cases, post-concussive symptoms may be prolonged.
5. No abnormality on standard structural neuroimaging studies is seen in concussion.¹

The suspected diagnosis of concussion can include one or more of the following clinical domains:

1. Symptoms: somatic (e.g. headache), cognitive (e.g., feeling in a fog), and/or emotional symptoms (e.g., depression, sadness).
2. Physical signs (e.g., loss of consciousness, amnesia, proprioceptive)
3. Behavioral changes (e.g. irritability)
4. Cognitive impairment (e.g., slowed reaction times)
5. Sleep disturbances (e.g., drowsiness)¹

If any one or more of these components is present, a concussion should be suspected.¹ The Graded Symptom Checklist [Appendix A] provides a more detailed, albeit, not comprehensive, list of common concussion symptoms.

Prevention of Concussion:

Prevention starts with education: education of student-athletes as well as coaches. The Houston Christian University Sports Medicine staff works hand in hand with our coaches and our equipment staff for the safety and well-being of all of our student-athletes. Education should be a constant effort that is always stressed. However, yearly educational sessions in each sports pre-season will allow the certified athletic trainer to educate his/her student-athletes on proper playing techniques that will reduce the likelihood of concussion occurrence (e.g. proper tackling form in football, proper heading of the soccer ball, how to fall in basketball). The aforementioned examples along with the following resources will help in efforts to reduce exposure to head trauma as much as is feasibly possible in athletic competition: adherence to Interassociation Consensus: Year-Round Football Practice Contact Recommendations, adherence to Interassociation Consensus: Independent Medical Care for College Student-Athletes Best Practices, reducing gratuitous contact during practice, taking a "safety-first" approach to sport, and taking the head out of contact. In addition to proper techniques, the education session which is now developed in ATS, will include giving each student-athlete and coach educational material discussing the signs and symptoms of a concussion as well as the proper steps to take in the event of a suspected concussion (e.g. NCAA Concussion Fact sheet). This material will also be distributed to other following parties as well: all physicians associated with the team, the entire Houston Christian University Athletic Training Staff, and the Director of Athletics at the beginning of the academic year. US Council for Athletes' Health (USCAH) utilizes athletics health space which is an online portal and virtual tool that guides the HCU athletic program through compliance criteria for preventative

healthcare and athlete safety. The Director of Sports Medicine at HCU will have a record of all personnel who have completed the USCAH educational modules and assessments (including concussion management) and the time it was completed.

In addition to education, care will be taken by members of the Sports Medicine staff to review the medical histories of each of our student-athletes to be aware of a previous history of concussion or brain injury. There is a benefit to a pre-participation concussion evaluation as it allows the Sports Medicine Team to modify and optimize protective behavior, if warranted, and is another opportunity for education of the student-athlete.¹ A vital component of the Pre-Participation Physical Exam (PPE) is baseline testing. Several different tools are used by the Sports Medicine team to obtain baseline measures for each student-athlete. These are discussed in further detail below. Ultimately, the team physician will determine the clearance of the student-athlete during the PPE or flag them for additional consultation and testing before clearance.

Along with the Houston Christian University Equipment staff, the Sports Medicine team will afford our student-athletes with the best possible equipment, ranging from football and baseball helmets to mouthpieces. Although no scientific studies have shown that either helmets or mouthpieces will prevent concussion, they both help in the prevention of more serious injuries (e.g. skull fractures/intracranial hematomas, dental fractures and avulsions) and *may* reduce the severity of concussions. The Sports Medicine staff, with the help of the Equipment staff, will assure that all of our equipment issued is in good working order, regularly serviced/reconditioned, fits properly, and meets the established standards of the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment and/or the American Society for Testing and Materials.

Recognition and Treatment of Concussion:

Houston Christian University Sports Medicine will have certified and/or licensed athletic trainers on site for all practices and competitions for all high risk collision/contact sports (e.g. basketball, football, soccer) as well as consistent coverage for the other varsity sports sponsored when possible. These healthcare professionals are trained in the prevention, recognition, treatment, and rehabilitation of all athletic injuries, including concussions. If a student-athlete shows any of the aforementioned signs of a concussion (somatic, cognitive, and emotional symptoms; physical signs; behavioral changes; cognitive impairment; or sleep disturbances), the student-athlete should be immediately evaluated on-site for a concussion and removed from further participation until medically cleared. If a concussion is confirmed upon evaluation, the student-athlete will be removed from practice/play for the remainder of the calendar day at minimum. In addition to the Athletic Trainers on site, the HCU Concussion Management team will also include our Team Physicians as well as our Neuropsychologist.

Many concussion assessment tools are available for the athletic trainer and medical management team. The preferred methods for evaluating for a suspected concussion on-site used by the Houston Christian University Sports Medicine staff are the Sport Concussion Assessment Tool 5th Edition (SCAT5) and the Balance Error Scoring System (BESS). These two tools are used to provide immediate feedback to the possibility of a concussion and the initial severity of the injury. In addition to these tools used to assess the nature and severity of the injury other tools include, but are not limited to, neuropsychological testing, neuroimaging studies, physician exam, and any additional investigations that may be deemed warranted. The SAC is a standardized test that allows for consistent evaluation and results that allows the athletic trainer the ability to measure neurocognitive status including orientation, immediate memory, concentration, and delayed recall on the sidelines. The BESS test allows for a measurable score to test the injured student-athlete's postural stability on the sideline, as well.² Baseline scores on the BESS will be obtained as part of the PPE for comparison's sake if injury were to occur. In addition to the on-field concussion diagnostics, the student-athlete will be clinically assessed for cervical spine trauma, skull fracture, intracranial bleed, and any other head, neck, or brain injury that could be possible based upon the mechanism of injury.

If serious complications are found on exam, the venue specific Emergency Action Plan will be initiated for any and all, but not limited to, the following findings:

- Glasgow Coma Scale <13
- Prolonged Loss of Consciousness
- Focal Neurological Deficit, Indicative of Intracranial Trauma
- Persistently Diminished/Worsening Mental Status or Other Neurological Signs/Symptoms

- Spine Injury

It is the policy of Houston Christian University Sports Medicine to test all of our student-athletes as part of their pre-participation physical exam using SWAY. The SWAY medical app is easily accessible on the mobile devices of the HCU sports medicine staff and is a useful tool to objectively measure balance, cognition, and function before and after sustaining a concussion. This testing during pre-participation evaluations allows us to have a baseline test to compare the concussed student-athlete 24-48 hours' post-injury and measure the cognitive impairment that the student-athlete is currently suffering. Follow-up tests are also performed until the student-athlete is symptom free and baseline measures back to within normal range.

Recovery of Concussion:

Every concussive injury is manifested differently. With this understanding, each student-athlete will be treated according to his or her individual symptoms. As stated above, these symptoms can be somatic, emotional, as well as cognitive. Treatment of a concussion requires rest, both physical and cognitive. After initial evaluation is completed, the student-athlete will be sent home with instructions for care that will provide him/her, and/or parent or roommate, information on the nature of the signs to be watched for (Appendix B). The injured student-athlete will be instructed to limit cognitive exertion as it can often exacerbate symptoms and delay full recovery. Tasks that the student-athlete will be required to limit include computer work, video games, television and/or film watching, texting, and in more severe cases the student-athlete may be held from class attendance. It has been shown that in more moderate to severe concussions, the injured student-athlete can suffer cognitive impairment and emotional changes that can negatively affect academic performance. In cases of more moderate to severe concussions where the student-athlete suffers cognitive impairment, the Sports Medicine Team will notify the Director of Academics. If the Sports Medicine Team deems that, in the best interest of short-term treatment and long-term recovery, the student-athlete should be held from class, a letter will be provided to the student's professors (Appendix C). Upon being held from academic and cognitive exertion, the student-athlete will follow a Return to Learn Protocol (Appendix E) which will include changes in academic attendance, academic modifications and accommodations depending on the severity of the concussion. These modifications will be provided by the team physician or neuropsychologist. Modifications will be communicated to the Athletic Department's Director of Academics who will flag the student-athletes account and communicate with advisers and professors. In all concussion cases, the student-athlete will be followed up with on a daily basis by the athletic trainer and will follow up with a physician within the first 24-48 hours' post-injury. Signs and symptoms will be documented throughout this monitoring and recovery phase until symptom free.

In cases of persistent symptoms and prolonged recovery, the student-athlete will be evaluated by a team physician and/or neuropsychologist to consider additional diagnoses and best treatment and management options. These additional diagnoses include, but are not limited to, the following: post-concussion syndrome, sleep dysfunction, migraine or other headache disorder, mood disorders such as anxiety and depression, or ocular or vestibular dysfunction.

When the student-athlete is symptom-free, a graduated progression of activity will be followed to ensure the safe and prudent return of the student-athlete to activity.¹

STEP-WISE RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL (Athlete will only advance ONE phase per day):

The athlete should be held out of all activities until asymptomatic at rest for at least 24 hours, though it is preferred to be asymptomatic for at least a 48-hour period. This asymptomatic period includes mental exertion in school to help reduce the reemergence of symptoms once initiating the return to play protocol.

PLEASE NOTE: If any concussive symptoms occur while returning to play, the athlete should stop all activity until asymptomatic for another 1-2 days. Once symptoms resolve, resume with the phase in which the athlete was previously asymptomatic (back to previous successful phase).

STEP 1 Light aerobic activity (10-15 minutes); NO resistance training

STEP 2 Moderate aerobic activity (20-30 minutes); Light resistance training

STEP 3 Sport-specific, non-contact training drills (at least 30 minutes); Continue light resistance training;
NO head impact activities or drills

STEP 4 Sport-specific, light contact training drills; Progressive return to normal resistance training

STEP 5 Full contact **practice** but **NO games or competition play**

STEP 6 FULL participation in games or competition play

*Some athletes may spend more time in certain phases based on sport, age, recovery, process, and injury severity

As the student-athlete progresses through the graduated progression, progress will be tracked by the athletic trainer on the RETURN-TO-PLAY CHECK SHEET (Appendix D).

The decision on returning to competition will be made based on several factors. No one factor is weighted more than the others. Return to play will be based on the following:

1. Symptom-free at rest and progressing through the Step-Wise Return to Play Protocol symptom-free.
2. A performance on the neuropsychological test (SWAY) returning to base-line or close to base-line levels.
3. An unremarkable neurologic exam by the Team Physician or his delegate.

The student-athlete will be released for a return to play when all of these factors have been met to the satisfaction of the Sports Medicine Team. The final determination of return-to-play will be made by the team physician or the medically qualified physician designee.

Conclusion

Concussions, while very serious injuries are one of the least understood injuries in Sports Medicine. The culture of athletics as well as the lack of understanding of the severity of these injuries causes most student-athletes to under report the number, severity, and duration of concussive injuries. In keeping with the mission statement of Houston Christian University Sports Medicine which states in part, "Above all else, we protect and promote the safety, health and well-being of every one of our student-athletes," we will err on the side of caution when concussive injuries occur. This policy will allow us to remain vigilant in protecting the safety and well-being of our student-athletes as well as their academic and long-term cognitive futures. As best summarized by Dr. Cantu while commenting on the 2nd International Conference on Concussion in Sport Held in Prague in 2004, "This protocol represents a work in progress, and, as with all other recommendations or proposals, it must be updated as new information is added to the current state of the literature and understanding of this injury."

Reference List:

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5. Concussion (Mild Traumatic Brain Injury) and the Team Physician: A Consensus Statement. *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise* [serial online]. February 2006;38(2):395-399. Available from: Academic Search Complete, Ipswich, MA. Accessed March 5, 2010.

APPENDIX A: GRADED SYMPTOM CHECKLIST

Graded Symptom Checklist (GSC)					
Symptom	Time of Injury	2-3 Hours Post-Injury	24 Hours Post-Injury	48 Hours Post-Injury	72 Hours Post-Injury
Blurred Vision					
Dizziness					
Drowsiness					
Excess Sleep					
Easily Distracted					
Fatigue					
Feel "In A Fog"					
Feel "Slowed Down"					
Headache					
Inappropriate Emotions					
Irritability					
Loss of Consciousness					
Loss of Orientation					
Memory Problems					
Nausea					
Nervousness					
Personality Change					
Poor Balance/Coordination					
Poor Concentration					
Ringing in the Ears					
Sadness					
Seeing Stars					
Sensitivity to Light					
Sensitivity to Noise					
Sleep Disturbance					
Vacant Stare/Glassy Eyed					
Vomiting					
<p>NOTE: The GSC should be used not only for the initial evaluation but for each subsequent follow-up assessment until all signs and symptoms have cleared at rest and during physical exertions. In lieu of simply checking each symptom present, the athletic trainer can ask the student-athlete to grade or score the severity of the symptom on a scale of 0-6, where 0=not present, 1=mild, 3=moderate, and 6= most severe.</p>					

APPENDIX B: HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

Name: _____

Date: _____

You have had a closed head injury or concussion and need to be watched closely for the next 24-48 hours.

It is OK to:

- Use Tylenol (acetaminophen)
- Use an ice pack for head or neck pain
- Eat a light meal
- Go to sleep

There is no need to:

- Check eyes with a light
- Wake up every hour
- Stay in bed

DO NOT:

- **Drink Alcohol**
- **Eat spicy foods**
- **Drive a car or bike**
- **Use Aspirin, Aleve, Advil, or any other NSAID medications**
- **Play on phone, TV, Video games**

Special Recommendations:

WATCH FOR ANY OF THE FOLLOWING INDICATIONS OF A WORSENING PROBLEM:

- Worsening headache
- Vomiting
- Decrease level of consciousness
- Dilated pupils
- Increased confusion
- Stumbling/loss of balance
- Weakness in one arm/leg
- Blurred vision
- Increased irritability

If any of these problems present, call your athletic trainer or doctor immediately.

Athletic Trainer: _____

Phone: _____

Doctor: _____

Phone: _____

You need to be in the athletic training room for a follow-up at _____ AM/PM.

Recommendations provided to _____

Recommendations provided by _____

APPENDIX C: SAMPLE CONCUSSION LETTER

Concussion Awareness Letter

Houston Christian University Sports Medicine and Academic Advising for Athletics would like to inform you that (STUDENT-ATHLETE) sustained a concussion during an intercollegiate (SPORTING EVENT) on (DATE). He/she is under the care of our team physician, (PHYSICIAN NAME). He/she will continue to be evaluated and tested for the next 48-72 hours. A concussion or mild traumatic brain injury can cause a variety of physical, cognitive, and emotional symptoms. Concussions range in significance from minor to major, but they all share one common factor — they temporarily interfere with the way your brain works. We would like to inform you that during the next few weeks this student-athlete may experience one or more of these signs and symptoms.

Headache	Nausea
Balance Problems	Dizziness
Diplopia - Double Vision	Confusion
Photophobia – Light Sensitivity	Difficulty Sleeping
Misophonia – Noise Sensitivity	Blurred Vision
Feeling Sluggish or Groggy	Memory Problems
Difficulty Concentrating	

As a department, we wanted to make you aware of this injury and the related symptoms that the student-athlete may experience. Although the student is attending class, please be aware that the side effects of the concussion may adversely impact his/her academic performance. Any consideration you may provide academically during this time would be greatly appreciated. We will continue to monitor the progress of this student-athlete and anticipate a full recovery. Should you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you in advance for your time and understanding with this matter.

Regards,

Hanna Stelzer, MAT, LAT, ATC

Assistant Athletic Director/Sports Medicine

(281) 649-3115

hstelzer@HBU.edu

APPENDIX D: RETURN-TO-PLAY CHECK SHEET

This form is to be initialed and dated by both the athlete and the approved healthcare professional tasked with implementing the Return-to-Play (RTP) Protocol. On the day following the completion of each level, the athlete is to be assessed by the designee in charge of the athlete's RTP. Athlete and designee will then initial and date that level to indicate that it was completed without any return in symptoms.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT ATHLETE IS ASYMPTOMATIC AND READY TO PROCEED WITH RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL

The athlete denies any symptoms concerning a concussion / MTBI. No symptoms are noted by the healthcare professional.

The athlete is ready to proceed with the Return to Play Protocol.

_____ Athlete's Initials _____ Designated Supervisor's Initials Date: _____

STEP 1 Light aerobic activity (10-15 minutes); NO resistance training

The athlete denies any symptoms concerning a concussion / MTBI. No symptoms are noted by the healthcare professional.

_____ Athlete's Initials _____ Designated Supervisor's Initials Date: _____

STEP 2 Moderate activity (20-30 minutes); LIGHT resistance training

The athlete denies any symptoms concerning a concussion / MTBI. No symptoms are noted by the healthcare professional.

_____ Athlete's Initials _____ Designated Supervisor's Initials Date: _____

STEP 3 Sport-specific, non-contact training drills (at least 30 minutes); Continue LIGHT resistance training; NO head impact activities or drills

The athlete denies any symptoms concerning a concussion / MTBI. No symptoms are noted by the healthcare professional.

_____ Athlete's Initials _____ Designated Supervisor's Initials Date: _____

STEP 4 Sport-specific light contact training drills; Progressive return to normal resistance training

The athlete denies any symptoms concerning a concussion / MTBI. No symptoms are noted by the healthcare professional.

_____ Athlete's Initials _____ Designated Supervisor's Initials Date: _____

STEP 5 Full contact practice but NO games or competition play

The athlete denies any symptoms concerning a concussion / MTBI. No symptoms are noted by the healthcare professional.

_____ Athlete's Initials _____ Designated Supervisor's Initials Date: _____

STEP 6 FULL participation in games or competition play

The athlete denies any symptoms concerning a concussion / MTBI. No symptoms are noted by the healthcare professional.

_____ Athlete's Initials _____ Designated Supervisor's Initials Date: _____

Once all phases of the Return to Play Protocol is completed successfully and the athlete is asymptomatic, this form must be signed by the Athletic Trainer and on file before the athlete can be allowed to return to full unrestricted sports participation.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

£ Certified / Licensed Athletic Trainer

APPENDIX E: Return to Learn

1. In addition to physical rest, the athlete recovering from a concussion also requires mental/cognitive rest.
2. Students recovering from a concussion find it very stressful to keep up with the academic demands while not feeling well physically and cognitively. As such, a stepwise progression back to school and various academic activities yields the best outcome.
 - The athlete will receive recommendations from team medical staff regarding restricted or limited use of stimulating activities such as cell phone texting, video games, or television.
 - Written documentation pertaining to class attendance and necessary academic modifications will be provided by the team physician and neuropsychologist based on the athlete's cognitive and physical evaluation results and severity of concussion symptoms. Accommodations may include but are not limited to:
 - Preferential classroom seating
 - Extended deadlines to complete projects homework assignments
 - Extended time to complete examinations
 - Ability to take examinations in a separate room away from other to reduce distractions
 - Pre-printed class lecture notes
 - Opportunity to tape record class lectures
 - Limit number of examinations in a 1-week period
 - Excused absence from class if symptoms worsen
 - Ability to make up missed work/examinations gradually
 - The athlete's academic advisor will be alerted to the athlete's concussive injury and recommendations by team clinicians for the student-athlete's return to learn progression. The academic advisor will seek to ensure:
 - The student-athlete's course instructors are aware of accommodations
 - Compliance with ADA
 - No academic activity on same day as concussion
 - Student-athletes with significant concussive symptoms that are unable to tolerate light cognitive exertion will not be allowed to attend classes and remain supervised at home/dorm
 - Modification of schedule/academic modifications for at least two weeks if not longer based on athlete condition
 - Individualized initial academic plan
 - The athlete's stepwise progression back into classroom activities will be at the combined discretion of the medical staff and academic advisor following a reasonable reduction in symptoms.
 - Identification and engagement of campus resources for cases that cannot be managed through schedule modification/academic accommodations. ADA office, Learning specialists, and Office of disability services may be included as the resources
 - Re-evaluation and modification of academic activity by academic advisor and/or team physician/neuropsychologist is expected should symptoms worsen or other academic challenges occur
 - A student-athlete should not attend practice or team meetings if they are not actively engaged in academic activity or classroom attendance nor should attend games or travel to sport competition with their team
3. The Athletics Academic Director will be the point of contact to facilitate the communication between the medical staff and the faculty and academic support staff for the return-to-learn protocol.
4. Multi-disciplinary team will navigate more complex cases of prolonged return to learn management. Multi-disciplinary team may include, but not be limited to:
 - Team Physician
 - Athletic Trainer
 - Psychologist/counselor
 - Neuropsychologist consultant
 - Faculty athletic representative
 - Academic advisor
 - Course instructor(s)
 - College administrators
 - Office of disability services representatives
 - coaches

XXX. MENTAL HEALTH POLICY

Purpose

“Inter-Association Consensus Document: Best Practices for Understanding and Supporting Student-Athlete Mental Wellness” (“Best Practices”) is a practical extension of the NCAA publication “Mind, Body and Sport: Understanding and Supporting Student-Athlete Mental Wellness” (www.NCAA.org/health-and-safety/sport-science-institute/introduction-mind-body-and-sport). These “Best Practices” are designed to provide athletics and sports medicine departments – regardless of size and resources – with recommendations for supporting and promoting student-athlete mental health. “Best Practices” are accompanied by a checklist of the key components for each athletics department.

Background

Mental health is an important and often overlooked dimension of overall student-athlete health and optimal functioning. Mental health exists on a continuum, with resilience and thriving on one end of the spectrum and mental health disorders that disrupt a student-athlete’s functioning and performance at the other. Approximately one in five adults experiences mental illness in a given year, and this rate tends to be highest among young adults, many of whom are college students. Prevalence estimates of mental illness among college athletes are relatively similar to their non-athlete peers. Even in the absence of a clinically diagnosable mental health disorder, student-athletes may have impaired overall well-being as a result of subclinical symptoms of mental health disorders such as anxiety, depression, and insomnia or the misuse of substances such as alcohol or prescription drugs. Emerging adulthood is an important and sometimes difficult developmental period. College athletes are faced with similar developmental challenges as their non-athlete peers and additionally must respond to the challenges and opportunities of collegiate sport. The sport environment has both risk and protective factors for mental health disorders. Additionally, genetic predispositions and environmental influences outside of the sport environment may impact mental health.

Mental and physical health are inextricably linked. For example, there is evidence suggesting an elevated risk of injury among athletes who experience anxiety or depression, who abuse alcohol, or who have an eating disorder. Furthermore, the athlete’s psychological response to injury has the potential to exacerbate existing vulnerabilities to depression or anxiety, substance abuse, or disordered eating behaviors. Insomnia and sleep disorders can be an indicator or risk factor for mental health challenges, and can compromise academic and athletic performance through direct or indirect pathways. Mental health is a key component of student-athlete wellness, and the athletics department can play a pivotal role in providing an environment that supports wellness while also providing resources so that student-athletes can obtain referrals to mental health services. The sport environment is an important venue for establishing mental health promotion practices, destigmatizing mental health challenges, normalizing care seeking, facilitating early identification of mental health disorders and ensuring that all student-athletes in need receive care from a licensed practitioner who is qualified to provide mental health services. It is also an important venue to learn about the role that mental well-being plays in total health and the ability to thrive, both on and off the field of play. Indeed, sport can provide an exceptional opportunity to promote and develop mental wellness for life. Student-athlete mental well-being is best served through a collaborative process of engaging the full complement of available campus and community resources, which may include athletics, campus health, counseling services, disability services and community agencies. Identifying the resources that are available and integrating strong professional working relationships across these areas are critical to ensure that professionals are informed and respond quickly and effectively. Such integration links professionals in a collaborative model of care that can enhance the ability of individual service providers and maximize support of student-athlete wellness.

Evaluation

Team Physician

Each student-athlete will complete a mental health questionnaire upon entering the athletic department to help assist the team physician during the pre-participation evaluation. This form will consist of questions selected by our team physician(s) as designated indicators of mental health issues as suggested by the NCAA. Upon review of the answers in this questionnaire, the examining team physician will decide if referral is needed for additional psychological evaluation.

Self

If the student decides he or she would like to take a follow up evaluation, the mental health questionnaire is available on the Houston Christian University Athletics Page – Athletic Training. Student self-evaluations brought forward to a coach should be classified as Immediate Referral (forward to University Police or 911) or Non-Immediate Referral and forwarded to the athletic training staff to notify Disability Services or Counseling Services as well as the team physician.

Immediate Referral

University Police (on campus 281-649-3911) or EMS 911 (off campus) for any of the following:

- Suicidal/Homicidal ideation
- Sexual assault
- Highly agitated or threatening behavior, acute psychosis or paranoia
- Acute delirium/ confused state
- Acute intoxication or drug overdose

Houston Christian University Police Website/Contact information - <https://hc.edu/about-hcu/the-campus/police/contact-hcu-police/>

In case of a mental health crisis, CALL 988 or seek the nearest Emergency Room

For physical health emergencies, CALL 911 or seek the nearest Emergency Room

OTHER RESOURCES:

Memorial Hermann Southwest Hospital (nearest Emergency Room to HCU) | (713) 456-5000 | 7600 Beechnut St, Houston, TX 77074

West Oaks Hospital | (713) 995-0909 | 6500 Hornwood Houston, TX 77074

Memorial Hermann Mental Health Crisis Clinic | (713) 338-6422 | 4850 W. Bellfort St. Houston TX 77035

Non-Immediate Referral

For all other issues (non-life threatening needing attention during university business hours) the student-athlete will be referred to the university's sports medicine team (i.e. athletic training staff, team physician) and professional counselors on campus or licensed psychologists off campus who are referred to by the team physicians. These symptoms may suggest but are not limited to:

- Disordered Eating
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Alcohol Use
- Cannabis Use
- Sleep Apnea
- Insomnia
- ADHD

Houston Christian University:

Disability Services

Those in need of accommodations within the classroom will be referred to the HCU Director of Testing and Disability Services

<https://hc.edu/academics/academic-resources/academic-accommodation/contact-the-disability-services-director/>

Email Disability Services at 504@HBU.edu

Counseling Services and Resources

<https://hc.edu/gideoncounseling/>

Call or email to make an appointment: (281) 649-3431 / counseling@HBU.edu

Located: Bradshaw Fitness Center, Second Floor

Return to Athletics

Student-athletes receiving help from mental health professionals must present appropriate documentation to the team physician.

All student-athletes must be cleared by the team physician prior to returning to athletics at Houston Christian University.

Houston Christian University

Sports Medicine Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation

Name: _____ Gender (Please Circle): Male / Female

Date of Birth: _____ Age: _____

Class: _____ Sport(s): _____

Mental Health Questionnaire

GENERAL

RESPONSE

- | | | |
|---|-----|----|
| 1. Do you wish you had more energy most days of the week? | Yes | No |
| 2. Do you feel anxious and nervous much of the time? | Yes | No |
| 3. Do you often feel sad or depressed? | Yes | No |
| 4. Do you have a hard time managing your emotions (frustration, anger, impatience)? | Yes | No |
| 5. Do you worry that you have lost control over how much you eat? | Yes | No |
| 6. Do you believe yourself to be fat when others say you are thin? | Yes | No |

Over the past two weeks, how often have you:

None or a little of the time = 0 Some of the time = 1 Most of the time = 2 All of the time = 3

RESPONSE

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Been feeling low in energy, slowed down? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2. Been feeling no interest in things? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3. Had feelings of worthlessness? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4. Thought about or wanted to commit suicide? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 5. Had difficulty concentrating or making decisions? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

Please carefully read each item in the list. Indicate how much you have been bothered by each symptom during the past month, including today, by indicating the response option using:

Not at all = 0 Mildly (but it didn't bother me too much) = 1 Moderately (it wasn't pleasant at times) = 2
Severely (it bothered me a lot) = 3

	RESPONSE			
1. Unable to relax	0	1	2	3
2. Fear of worst happening	0	1	2	3
3. Terrified or afraid	0	1	2	3
4. Fear of losing control	0	1	2	3
5. Scared	0	1	2	3

Use this key to answer the next 3 questions:

Never = 0 Monthly or less = 1 2-4 times per month = 2 2-3 times per week = 3 4 or more times per week = 4

	RESPONSE				
1. How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?	0	1	2	3	4
2. How many drinks containing alcohol do you have on a typical day?	0	1	2	3	4
3. How often do you have six or more drinks on one occasion?	0	1	2	3	4

XXXI. DRUG POLICY

A. POLICY

The HCU Athletic Department may request any or all student-athletes to provide a urine or saliva specimen to be analyzed at any time. The confidentiality of test results has been provided for, and will be respected, during the entire testing procedure. An off-campus laboratory will perform analysis for the Athletic Department. A student-athlete with a positive test result will be re-analyzed using the most accurate testing method available. If a person produces a positive confirmation test, that person will have an opportunity to pursue a counseling/rehabilitation program to assist him/her in a return to a drug free life.

Consequences of a Positive Test

Positive Test	HCU Consequences (if tested by HCU)	NCAA Consequences (if tested by NCAA) NCAA Bylaws 18.4.1.4
Positive Test #1	Required counseling/rehab & spot checks performed	Loss of 365 days of eligibility equivalent to 1 season of competition for banned drugs other than cannabinoids or narcotics - can practice but no competitions Loss of 50% of competition eligibility for positives in cannabinoids or narcotics Institution managed education substance misuse education plan for positive test results for cannabinoids.
Positive Test #2	Required counseling/rehab Suspended from games/practices for 1 year and spot checks performed	If a student-athlete who previously tested positive for use of a substance in a banned drug class other than cannabinoids or narcotics tests positive a second time for use of a substance in a banned drug class other than cannabinoids or narcotics, the student-athlete shall lose all remaining regular-season and postseason eligibility in all sports. If a student-athlete who previously tested positive for use of a substance in a banned drug class other than cannabinoids or narcotics tests positive for use of a substance in the banned drug classes cannabinoids or narcotics, the student-athlete shall be ineligible for competition for 50 percent of a season in all sports Institution managed education substance misuse education plan for positive test results for cannabinoids.
Positive Test #3	Ineligible and scholarship revoked	

B. PROCEDURE

1. Establish the date, time, and place regarding testing.
2. Have student-athlete sign an informed consent and release of liability form, if not already on file.
 - a. Liaison explains the form
3. Give athlete Drug Testing Notification and have them sign
 - a. Have student-athlete endorse a log of any known drugs, including prescriptions, taken.
4. Student-athlete will report at the designated time for collection and will be given a sterile specimen collection bottle.

- a. Student-athlete will be observed by an official
 - b. One student-athlete at a time
 - c. Student-athlete will seal specimen bottle and place in mailer.
5. The Athletic Trainer will ensure security of specimen and log sheet.
 6. The testing facility performs the screening and notifies, by internet, only the Head Athletic Trainer of positive test results.
 - a. Student-athletes with negative test results will not be notified in any way.
 7. The Head Athletic Trainer maintains the confidentiality of the reports until the hard copy of positive results is received.
 8. The Head Athletic Trainer notifies the Head Coach of results.
 9. The Head Athletic Trainer and head coach notify the Director of Athletics.
 10. The Head Coach (after discussions with the Head Athletic Trainer and Director of Athletics) is responsible for establishing a private meeting with the student-athlete.
 - a. To reinforce and clarify the athletic department's drug program policy.
 - b. To request that the student-athlete contact a counselor and begin a counseling process that is recommended by a counselor. This will be at expense to the athlete. Counseling sessions should not interfere with practice or class times.
 11. The counselor should notify the Head Athletic Trainer that the athlete did establish and attend at least two meetings.
 12. The Head Athletic Trainer notifies that another specimen is requested on a spot check which is the same day as notification of the test. This usually occurs 5-8 weeks after the receipt of the original test results.
 13. If testing was performed by the NCAA the consequence of a positive test result would be loss of a season of eligibility.
 14. A second positive test results in a meeting in a meeting of the student-athlete, Head Coach, Head Athletic Trainer, and Director of Athletics
 - a. Student-athlete is informed he/she is suspended from all intercollegiate practices and games for the remainder of season.
 - b. That he/she must seek professional counseling and rehabilitation that must be confirmed by the counselor to the Head Athletic Trainer.
 - c. Student-athlete is informed that they will be spot checked frequently in the future.
 - d. NCAA regulates that a second positive test, if it is street drug related, will cause you to lose your current year and the subsequent year of eligibility. If a non-street drug related positive test, you lose the remainder of eligibility.
 15. For HCU purposes a student-athlete, at his/her own expense, may have a test completed by an independent testing facility at any time with a hard copy of results provided to the head athletic trainer by the testing facility.
 - a. A negative test result would satisfy the student-athlete's responsibilities.
 - b. This is not an option if NCAA is testing.
 16. A third positive test may indicate a chemical dependency that will result in a referral to a more appropriate professional rehabilitation program as determined by the athlete's designated counselor.
 - a. The Director of Athletics and Head Coach meet with the student-athlete.
 - b. The student-athlete is informed of his/her future ineligibility from intercollegiate athletics at HCU.
 - c. The student-athlete is informed of the revocation of his/her athletically based financial aid.
 - d. The student-athlete is informed of the designated counselor's prescribed treatment/rehabilitation plan.

C. NCAA BANNED DRUGS/SUBSTANCES

Please note that the list of banned drugs is subject to change by the NCAA Executive Committee, and the institution and student-athlete shall be held accountable for all banned drug classes on the current list. Updates to the list of banned drugs can be found via the NCAA web site at <https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2015/6/10/ncaa-banned-substances.aspx>.

IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO CHECK WITH THE APPROPRIATE OR DESIGNATED ATHLETICS STAFF BEFORE USING ANY SUBSTANCE.

The following is the list of banned-drug classes, pursuant to NCAA Division I Bylaw 18.4.1.4.7 (effective August 1, 2022).

NCAA Banned-Drug Classes

The NCAA list of banned-drug classes is subject to change by the NCAA Executive Committee. Contact NCAA education services or www.ncaa.org/health-and-safety for the current list. The term "related compounds" comprises substances that are included in the

class by their pharmacological action and/or chemical structure. No substance belonging to the prohibited class may be used, regardless of whether it is specifically listed as an example. Many nutritional/dietary supplements contain NCAA banned substances. In addition, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not strictly regulate the supplement industry; therefore, purity and safety of nutritional dietary supplements cannot be guaranteed. Impure supplements may lead to a positive NCAA drug test. The use of supplements is at the student-athlete's own risk. Student-athletes should contact their institution's team physician or athletic trainer for further information.

The NCAA bans the following classes of drugs:

- a. Stimulants
- b. Anabolic Agents
- c. Alcohol and Beta Blockers (banned for rifle only)
- d. Diuretics and Other Masking Agents
- e. Narcotics
- f. Cannabinoids
- g. Peptide hormones, growth factors, related substances and mimetics
- h. Hormone and metabolic modulators (anti-estrogens)
1. Beta-2 Agonists

Note: This is not a complete or exhaustive list. Any substance chemically related to these classes is also banned.

Any substance chemically/pharmacologically related to all classes listed above and with no current approval by any governmental regulatory health authority for human therapeutic use (e.g., drugs under pre-clinical or clinical development or discontinued, designer drugs, substances approved only for veterinary use) is also banned. The institution and the student-athlete shall be held accountable for all drugs within the banned-drug class regardless of whether they have been specifically identified. Examples of substances under each class can be found at www.ncaa.org/drugtesting. There is no complete list of banned substances.

Substances and Methods Subject to Restrictions:

- a. Blood and Gene Doping
- b. Local Anesthetics (permitted under some conditions)
- c. Manipulation of Urine Samples
- d. Beta-2 Agonists (permitted only by inhalation with prescription)
- e. Tampering of urine samples

NCAA Nutritional/Dietary Supplements Warning: Before consuming any nutritional/dietary supplement product, review the product with the appropriate or designated athletics department staff!

- Nutritional/dietary supplement, including vitamins and minerals, are not well regulated and may cause a positive drug test
- Student-athletes have tested positive and lost their eligibility using nutritional/dietary supplement
- Many nutritional/dietary supplements are contaminated with banned drugs not listed on the label
- **Any product containing a nutritional/dietary supplement ingredient is taken at your own risk**

NOTE TO STUDENT-ATHLETES: THERE IS NO COMPLETE LIST OF BANNED SUBSTANCES DO NOT RELY ON THIS LIST TO RULE OUT ANY SUPPLEMENT INGREDIENT. Check with your athletics department staff prior to using a supplement.

Some examples of NCAA Banned Substances in Each Drug Class:

Stimulants: amphetamine (Adderall); caffeine (guarana); cocaine; ephedrine; methamphetamine; methylphenidate (Ritalin); synephrine (bitter orange); dimethylamylamine (DMAA, methylhexanamine); "bath salts" (mephedrone); Octopamine; hordenine; dimethylbutylamine (DMBA, AMP, 4-amino methylpentane citrate); phenethylamines (PEAs); dimethylhexylamine (DMHA, Octodrine); heptaminol etc. *exceptions: phenylephrine and pseudoephedrine are not banned.*

Anabolic Agents (sometimes listed as a chemical formula, such as 3,6,17-androstenetrione): Androstenedione; boldenone; clenbuterol; DHEA (7-Keto); epi-trenbolone; testosterone; etiocholanolone; methasterone; methandienone; nandrolone; norandrostenedione; stanozolol; stenbolone; trenbolone; SARMS (ostarine, ligandrol, LGD-4033, S-23, RAD140)); DHCMT (oral turanibol) etc.

Alcohol and Beta Blockers (banned for rifle only): alcohol; atenolol; metoprolol; nadolol; pindolol; propranolol; timolol; etc.

Diuretics and Masking Agents: bumetanide; chlorothiazide; furosemide; hydrochlorothiazide; probenecid; spironolactone (canrenone); triameterene; trichlormethiazide; etc. *exceptions: finasteride is not banned*

Narcotics: Buprenorphine; dextromoramide; diamorphine (heroin); fentanyl, and its derivatives; hydrocodone; hydromorphone; methadone; morphine; nicomorphine; oxycodone; oxymorphone; pentazocine; pethidine

Cannabinoids: marijuana; tetrahydrocannabinol (THC); synthetic cannabinoids (e.g., spice, K2, JWH-018, JWH-073)

Peptide Hormones, growth factors, related substances and mimetics: growth hormone(hGH); human chorionic gonadotropin (hCG); erythropoietin (EPO); IGF-1 (colostrum, deer antler velvet); etc. *exceptions: insulin, Synthroid are not banned*

Hormone and metabolic modulators (anti-estrogens): anastrozole; tamoxifen; formestane; ATD; SERMS (clomiphene, nolvadex); Arimidex; clomid; evista; fulvestrant; aromatase inhibitors (Androst-3,5-dien-7,17-dione), letrozole; etc.

Beta-2 Agonists: bambuterol; formoterol; salbutamol; salmeterol; higenamine; norcoclaurine; etc.

Any substance that is chemically related to the class, even if it is not listed as an example, is also banned!

Information about ingredients in medications and nutritional/dietary supplements can be obtained by contacting Drug Free Sport AXIS, (816) 474-7321 or www.dfaxis.com password: ncaa1, ncaa2, or ncaa3.

It is your responsibility to check with the appropriate or designated athletics staff before using any substance.

XXXII. LIGHTNING POLICY

All coaches, athletic staff, and medical staff should be aware of safety precautions during inclement weather. All are responsible for following the established emergency action plan specific to lightning safety.

According to the NCAA, the athletic trainer is empowered with the unchallengeable authority to cancel or modify workouts for health and safety reasons, as he or she deems appropriate. The athletic trainer is responsible for the well-being of all student-athletes and must put their safety first when questionable situations arise, such as inclement weather. The chain of command when implementing the inclement weather/lightning policy emergency action plan is as follows: the athletic trainer has sole authority on establishing the plan for the safety of the student-athletes. If an athletic trainer is not present, then the coaches are the authoritative administrator which will implement the guidelines of the emergency action plan.

When inclement weather is present and the emergency action plan is put into place, the athletics staff is responsible for announcing possible threats to innocent bystanders and other sports teams present. At that time, the staff should recommend all bystanders move to safety in either a close building or their vehicle. We must educate bystanders not to take cover under trees, bleachers, or other tall objects.

The Evacuation Plan is as follows:

- Determine how and where the group will evacuate. An enclosed building is the ideal evacuation area. Evacuate to the closest and safest indoor structure. (NOT dugouts, batting cages, covered benches, storage buildings, under trees or other tall objects, or portable

toilets.) From the soccer fields it is Dillon. For softball and baseball it is the Morris Cultural Arts Center. If you are traveling and need shelter without a building close, take cover in your fully enclosed vehicles with windows closed.

- Avoid metallic objects such as bleachers, flag poles, golf clubs, and bats. Avoid using landlines and plumbing in the building.
- Avoid electric power line areas or areas with standing water.
- Do not be the highest/tallest object or close to/connected to a tall object.
- Communicate the evacuation plan thoroughly to the group.
- Be aware of the possible weather predictions and conditions before beginning the outdoor activity and monitor all conditions via lightning detectors and radar systems via the internet or weather radio.

The primary source of lightning detection is the internet weather service linked to the athletic trainer's phone. If the phone is not present, always use the 30/30 Flash-to-Bang for the precautionary system.

Flash-to-Bang 30/30 Rule

- Person sees lightning strike. Count the seconds until you hear the thunder. Divide the seconds counted by five (5). For each five (5) second count, the lightning is approximately one mile away.
- For a 30-second count, the lightning is six (6) miles away. At this time, you should be evacuated.
- The National Lightning Institute and National Weather Service recommend that you have already evacuated to a safe structure by this time. You should already have taken cover before the flash-bang count reaches six (6) miles. (Lightning can strike up to 8-10 miles away.)
- You may resume activity 30 minutes AFTER you hear the last sound of thunder or see the last lightning strike. This is also the rules officials/umpires/referees must follow. (Just because the sky clears and turns blue, does not mean it is safe to return to play.) Certain lightning detectors will tell you when storms have passed and lightning is no longer in the area. This may be less time than the 30 minutes and at that time, it is deemed safe to return.

In Case of Lightning Strike Emergency

- **Call 911 Immediately**
- Move victim to a safe area
- Perform CPR/FA to victim until EMS arrives
- Monitor vitals, keep the victim still, and treat for shock if the victim is coherent before EMS arrives.

If you have any additional questions regarding the contents of the Student-Athlete Handbook, please feel free to contact the HCU Compliance and Academics Office.

XXXIII. MEDICAL HARSHIPS AND DISQUALIFICATIONS POLICY

A. MEDICAL HARSHIPS POLICY

The medical hardship process is an important tool by which a student-athlete can receive an additional year of competition if, after participating in limited competition during a particular academic year, the student-athlete suffers a season-ending injury and the criteria set forth in NCAA Bylaw 12.8.4 are satisfied. It is the responsibility and duty of every individual involved in the medical hardship process to conduct themselves with the highest level of ethics, integrity, objectivity and professionalism. No medical hardship petition may be submitted unless and until it is verified that all of the criteria set forth in Bylaw 12.8.4 have been met (see "Relevant NCAA Legislation" section of this policy for a copy of Bylaw 12.8.4).

Every medical hardship case shall be scrutinized closely by all parties prior to submission to the Southland or Ohio Valley Conference. Cases involving "overuse" injuries and other conditions that are more subjective in nature (e.g., patellar tendonitis, back pain) shall be examined with an extra level of scrutiny.

The role of the athletic trainers and physicians in the medical hardship process is limited to:

1. Rendering a professional opinion as to whether the student-athlete, as a result of an injury/illness, was unable to return to competition for the remainder of a particular playing season; and
2. Providing copies of relevant medical/training room records that have been kept in the normal course of caring for the health of safety of HCU student-athletes. In this regard, it is important to note that no athletic trainer or team physician reports to the coaching staff of the sport to which the athletic trainer or team physician may be assigned. Athletic trainers and team physicians are expected to exercise independent professional judgment at all times. If an athletic trainer or team physician finds himself or herself in a position of conflict with a coach or other staff member, the athletic trainer or team physician should bring the matter to the sport administrator or other appropriate university administrator immediately without fear of retribution.

The medical hardship process is not an alternative means by which a student-athlete can redshirt and preserve a year of eligibility. In order to be eligible for a medical hardship, the student-athlete's injury/illness must satisfy all of the criteria set forth in NCAA Bylaw 12.8.4, including the requirement that injury/illness be incapacitating to the point that the student-athlete cannot compete for the entire remainder of the playing season. If a student-athlete sustains an injury but is able to return to competition at any point later in the season, a medical hardship petition will not be filed for that student-athlete.

Procedures

A medical hardship petition cannot be filed for a student-athlete until the entire traditional/championship playing season in the student-athlete's sport has been completed during the year in which the injury/illness occurred. The following is the process by which a Medical Hardship Request is processed:

1. At the conclusion of the applicable season, the Compliance office prepares the participation report, based off of the squad list and statistics listed online. Compliance office shares a draft of the document with the Head Coach, SID, and Athletic Trainer to verify if the information is accurate. If it is accurate, all parties will sign and it will be submitted to the conference office.
2. If there is belief a student-athlete qualifies for a medical hardship/redshirt on the list, the Sports Medicine department works on gathering all applicable medical documentation, as well as getting the physician's letter noting medical incapacitation.
 - a. If the student-athlete uses a personal physician (not HCU affiliated), it is the responsibility of the student-athlete to submit all medical documentation to the Athletic Trainer.
3. Athletic Trainer turns all medical documentation into the Compliance Office.
4. Compliance Office gathers all required documents (stats, medical, etc.) and prepares the conference medical hardship form.
5. Compliance Office gets prepared conference form signed, then submits to conference office for approval/denial decision.

Note: This applies for injuries, illnesses and mental health conditions.

B. MEDICAL DISQUALIFICATIONS POLICY

The permanent injury status/medical disqualification process allows HCU to continue providing athletically-related financial aid to a student-athlete, without the aid counting against NCAA team financial aid limits, if the student-athletes becomes injured or ill to the point that the student-athlete cannot participate further in intercollegiate athletics. For example, if a student-athlete receiving athletics aid were to become permanently injured during the fall semester, the student-athlete's athletics aid would count against the team limit for the entirety of the current academic year, but the student-athlete's aid could be renewed for the following academic year(s) and be exempt from the team limits. It is the responsibility and duty of every individual involved in the medical disqualification process to conduct themselves with the highest level of ethics, integrity, objectivity and professionalism. Unlike the medical hardship process, the medical disqualification process does not involve the Conference. Rather, decisions regarding medical disqualifications rest exclusively with the treating physician and medical team. Every medical disqualification case shall be scrutinized closely by all parties involved. No medical disqualification may be approved unless and until it is verified that the criteria

set forth in Bylaw 15.5.1.3.1 have been met (see "Relevant NCAA Legislation" section of this policy). As with the medical hardship process, the role of the athletic trainers and physicians in the medical disqualification process is limited to:

1. Rendering a professional opinion as to whether the student-athlete, as a result of an injury/illness, is permanently unable to participate in intercollegiate athletics (this includes mental health related conditions); and
2. Providing copies of relevant medical/training room records that have been kept in the normal course of caring for the health of safety of HCU student-athletes. In this regard, it is important to note that no athletic trainer or team physician reports to the coaching staff of the sport to which the athletic trainer or team physician may be assigned. Athletic trainers and team physicians are expected to exercise independent professional judgment at all times. If an athletic trainer or team physician finds himself or herself in a position of conflict with a coach or other HCU staff member, the athletic trainer or team physician should bring the matter to the sport administrator or other appropriate administrator immediately without fear of retribution. The medical disqualification process is not an alternative means for a student-athlete to quit the team yet retain his or her athletics aid when he or she is capable of continuing to participate. Nor is it an alternative means for a coach to "run off" a student-athlete by cutting the student-athlete from the team and allowing the student-athlete to retain his or her athletics aid even when the student-athlete is capable of participating. In order to be eligible for a medical disqualification, the student-athlete's injury/illness must satisfy the criteria of Bylaw 15.5.1.3 and permanently prevent the student-athlete from continuing to participate in intercollegiate athletics. All HCU staff members and student-athletes are strictly prohibited from attempting to exert pressure on an athletic trainer, other HCU staff member, team physician or student-athlete to pursue or support a medical disqualification when one is not justified under NCAA rules.

Conditions for Continued Receipt of Athletics Aid

As a condition for receiving athletically-related financial aid from the athletics department while medically disqualified, the student-athlete must abide by the Student-Athlete Code of Conduct. In addition, the student-athlete shall be required to work in the athletics department for 20 hours per week each semester in exchange for the athletically-related financial aid. If the student-athlete fails to fulfill his or her work responsibilities in a timely manner, the athletics department may revoke the athletics aid immediately. In the letter/memorandum approving the medical disqualification, the Athletic Director shall (i) inform the student-athlete that he or she remains subject to the Student-Athlete Code of Conduct; (ii) notify the student-athlete of the work requirement and the athletics department's right to revoke the aid if the work requirement is not satisfied; and (iii) direct the student-athlete to contact the compliance office to obtain a work assignment.

Procedures

A request for a medical disqualification can occur at any time and may be initiated formally by treating Physician, the Team Athletic Trainer, and the Assistant Athletic Director for Sports Medicine. As soon as it becomes apparent that a student-athlete may qualify for permanent injury status, the medical team will inform the Head coach and sport administrator.

If the treating Physician believes that a student-athlete qualifies for a medical disqualification, the following steps must be taken:

1. Treating Physician will fill out the HCU Certification of Medical Disqualification form by writing a statement including:
 - a. Diagnosis of injury or illness
 - b. The severity of the injury or illness that would prevent the student-athlete from further participation
 - c. Medical reason for disqualifying the student-athlete from competition in intercollegiate sports.
2. Assistant Athletic Director for Sports Medicine will sign the form along with Head Coach and student-athlete and submit to Compliance.
3. Compliance will sign the form, notify applicable parties, and file the form.

Relevant NCAA Legislation

12.8.4 Hardship Waiver. A student-athlete may be granted an additional year of competition by the conference or the Committee on Student-Athlete Reinstatement for reasons of "hardship." Hardship is defined as an incapacity resulting from an injury or illness that has occurred under all of the following conditions:

(a) The incapacitating injury or illness occurs in one of the four seasons of intercollegiate competition at any two-year or four-year collegiate institutions or occurs after the first day of classes in the student-athlete's senior year in high school;

(b) The injury or illness occurs prior to the first contest or date of competition of the second half of the playing season that concludes with the NCAA championship in that sport and results in incapacity to compete for the remainder of that playing season; and

(c) The injury or illness occurs when the student-athlete has not participated in more than three contests or dates of competition or 30 percent of the maximum number of contests or dates of competition of the playing season that concludes with the NCAA championship as set forth in Bylaw [17](#) for the applicable sport plus one contest or date of competition, whichever is greater.

15.5.1.3.1 Incapacitating Injury or Illness. If an incapacitating injury or illness occurs prior to a prospective student-athlete's or a student-athlete's participation in athletically related activities and results in the student-athlete's inability to compete ever again, the student-athlete shall not be counted within the institution's maximum financial aid award limitations for the current, as well as later, academic years. However, if the incapacitating injury or illness occurs on or after the student-athlete's participation in countable athletically related activities in the sport, the student-athlete shall be counted in the institution's maximum financial aid limitations for the current academic year but need not be counted in later academic years.

15.5.1.3.2 Change in Circumstances. If circumstances change and the student-athlete subsequently practices or competes at the institution at which the incapacitating injury or illness occurred, the student-athlete again shall become a counter, and the institution shall be required to count that financial aid under the limitations of this bylaw in the sport in question during each academic year in which the financial aid was received.

XXXIV. STAND AS ONE PLEDGE

While the Athletic Department at HCU by itself cannot solve the problems that plague our nation, we do firmly believe that we can be change agents within our own environments. We do not have the answer as to how we will have that impact, but as Christians we believe that it is our duty to attempt to do so. We believe God's word provides clear instruction:

"If someone says, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen." I John 4:20

"Then God said, Let us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness..." Genesis 1:26

"Do we not all have one father? Has not one God created us?" Malachi 2:10

"And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth..." Acts 17:26

And finally as Peter wrote in the book of Acts, "I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality, but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him" Acts 10:34-35

With this strong belief in God's support of equality and no partiality, we believe that the first step toward that positive change is to Stand As One.

We do not stand to be silent.

We do not stand to be misunderstood.

We stand for the simple fact that black lives matter.

Our commitment then is to begin to do that in each of the following ways:

LISTEN: In order to better empower our student-athletes, we will listen more carefully and thoughtfully to the issues they raise, the insights they offer, the solutions they propose, and the emotions they experience.

AMPLIFY: We will amplify the voices of our student-athletes as we realize that what our student-athletes express often is a voice for all of our students at HCU.

FOCUS: We will set aside time during each SAAC meeting to discuss issues that are relative to social justice.

DIVERSIFY: We will seek to ensure that with each staff hiring there will be at least one minority candidate interviewed for that position. We will also appoint a Racial Diversity Liaison for the athletic department.

ENGAGE: we will seek out a volunteer cause that relates to this issue to be promoted to all of our student-athletes this school year. This may be either an on-campus or an off campus cause.

PARTICIPATE: We will encourage all of our athletes and staff to become involved as citizens and exercise their civic responsibility to vote.

While each of the foregoing represent a firm commitment, they may not encompass all of our efforts. The way forward will ultimately depend on the ideas each of us contributes and the commitments we make. We look forward to working with our student-athletes, coaches, staff, and faculty to bring this plan to life.

