

**MARTIN LUTHER  
COLLEGE**



**STUDENT-ATHLETE  
HANDBOOK  
2024-2025**

## Martin Luther College

### 2024-2025 Edition

Congratulations on being a member of one of Martin Luther College's intercollegiate athletic teams. This student-athlete handbook was developed for you to provide you with pertinent information about our intercollegiate athletic program. We hope that this information will answer any questions that you may have as an MLC athlete and help to ensure that you will have a positive student-athlete experience. You, as a student-athlete, are responsible for reading and understanding the information contained in this handbook. Feel free to contact the Athletic Director if you need assistance in interpreting any of this information.

#### **I. Philosophy of the Martin Luther College Athletic Program**

The Martin Luther College intercollegiate athletic program provides services in concert with the mission of the college and the underlying mission of the WELS.

The athletic program is to be accessible to all students who have the skills, abilities, and interests in participating in college athletics and providing an extra-curricular environment which will enrich learning and personal growth. In providing this learning environment, the program places emphasis on the academic success of student-athletes, the fair and equitable treatment of women and men, the principles of fair play and amateur athletic competition, and the health and welfare of student-athletes. In summary, the mission is to enhance the spiritual, educational, social, and athletic growth of MLC's student-athletes, encouraging them to maximize all of their gifts.

Thus, MLC also expects Christian sportsmanship of all student-athletes at all practice and athletic contests.

#### **II. Academic Priority**

Martin Luther College believes that its student-athletes are students first and those academic commitments will in most cases, have priority over athletic activities. Student-athletes are expected to attend classes and adhere to the attendance policies outlined by their professors.

Practices: Classes always have priority over any practice session.

Contests: When a student-athlete is required to miss a class to attend an athletics contest, he/she will not be penalized for this absence. However, the student-athlete has the responsibilities of notifying each instructor in advance of the absence; of making necessary arrangements for missed assignments, quizzes, and exams; and of seeking ways to compensate for the missed class content. Returning home late after an away contest is not an acceptable excuse for missing a class the following morning.

### III. Eligibility

1. Academic – to be eligible for participation in intercollegiate athletics and competition, a student-athlete must meet the requirements listed in each of the following areas:
  - a. Full-time enrollment: Student-athletes must register for a minimum of 12 credit hours; withdrawing to below 12 credits will result in immediate ineligibility. Student-athletes must see their coaches or advisers before withdrawing from any class during the semester.
  - b. Good academic standing: The student’s cumulative GPA must meet the requirements as listed below, for good academic standing. Failure to meet these minimums may result in academic probation and ineligibility. A student is automatically ineligible if he/she achieves a semester GPA less than 1.50. (Please see p. 31-32 of the Undergraduate Catalog for additional information).

Sem. 1 – 1.70	Sem. 2 – 1.80	All remaining semesters – 2.00
Sem. 3 – 1.90	Sem. 4 – 2.00	
  - c. Four seasons/ten-semester rule: A student-athlete is allowed four seasons of participation in an intercollegiate sport. A student-athlete is charged with a season of competition if he/she appears for even one second in a contest or practices with a team after its first scheduled competition of the season. Student-athletes must complete their four seasons of eligibility during the first ten semesters in which they are enrolled on a full-time basis in any post-secondary institution.
  - d. NCAA Student-Athlete Statement and Drug Testing Consent Form; Every student-athlete must read and sign the NCAA Student-Athletic Statement and Drug-Testing consent forms which will be administered by the Athletic Director or designee.
2. Medical: Before student-athletes may participate in any practice or competition, they must submit the following items to the Athletic Office:
  - a. A pre-participation sports physical completed by a licensed physician: The physical for all transfer students and traditional students (alternate years beginning with freshman year) must be dated on or after May 1 of the student’s incoming year.
  - b. A completed and up-to-date medical history form
  - c. Incoming freshmen and transfer students must provide results of a sickle cell solubility test.
  - d. Complete additional athletic forms including the Injury and Concussion Acknowledgment form and Catastrophic Injury Attestation form.
  - e. Current health insurance information that includes major medical coverage: All student-athletes must have medical insurance coverage. If no current proof of insurance is submitted to the Athletic Office, participation in intercollegiate athletics is not allowed.

### IV. Hazards to Eligibility: Alcohol/Tobacco/Drugs/Gambling/Hazing policies

1. Alcohol: The state of Minnesota requires that a person be 21 years of age or older to purchase, possess, or consume alcoholic beverages. The Athletic Department at Martin Luther College has a responsibility to promote the health and well-being of our student-athletes. Because alcohol consumption has been proven to be detrimental to general health, academic, and athletic performance, we encourage student-athletes to exercise

self-discipline and self-awareness in their alcohol consumption. We strongly recommend that student-athletes of legal age refrain from alcohol consumption during their season and expect that student-athletes under the age of 21 will not consume alcohol. Coaches, in consultation with the Athletic Director, may have more restrictive team policies ranging from community service to dismissal from the team if violations occur.

2. Tobacco: The athletic program prohibits the use of any tobacco product by student-athletes during any team function (practice, games, and trips). The use of E-cigarettes also is prohibited. The use of chewing tobacco is a violation of NCAA and UMAC policy and will result in disciplinary action up to and including removal from the team.
3. Marijuana: Possession or use of marijuana by any student-athlete is strictly prohibited.
4. Illegal drugs: Possession or use of any illegal drug by any student-athlete is strictly prohibited.
5. Gambling is defined as the exchange of money and goods for the use of lotteries, chance tickets, promotional schemes, betting, and wagering. MLC views gambling as poor stewardship, unwise use of God-given resources, and therefore finds gambling not acceptable in any form. Gambling jeopardizes your athletic eligibility.
6. Hazing is defined as subjecting a fellow community member to abusive or humiliating pranks. MLC does not permit hazing. Any student participating in a prank-type activity, which potentially endangers or adversely affects the physical and emotional well-being of another community member can expect immediate disciplinary action.

## **V. Intercollegiate Athletics at Martin Luther College**

Martin Luther College fields intercollegiate teams in men's football, women's volleyball, men's soccer, women's soccer, men's golf, women's golf, men's cross country, women's cross country, men's basketball, women's basketball, men's indoor track, women's indoor track, men's outdoor track, women's outdoor track, men's tennis, women's tennis, men's baseball, and women's softball.

The MLC athletic teams (The Knights) participate in the Upper Midwest Athletic Conference (UMAC). The Knights are also members of the NCAA Division III level.

The MLC Knights utilize both on-campus and other public and private venues for practice and competition. The Luther Student Center serves as headquarters for the athletic program and also provides the play area for basketball and volleyball. Football and softball are also played on on-campus fields. The MLC Soccer Complex (four blocks from the main campus) has our soccer fields, and is also where our home baseball field and new tennis courts are.

The new Betty Kohn Fieldhouse also provides additional indoor practice space and locker rooms. The Knights also compete at the New Ulm Country Club (golf).

## **VI. Practice Guidelines**

Times: By NCAA rule, student-athletes may not skip class to attend practice if they have a time conflict. Martin Luther College's coaching staff tries to schedule practices at times that will allow the most team members to attend; this effort may result in different practice times on different days of the week. When necessary, coaches may schedule practice times early in the morning or late in the evening.

Off-day: When classes are in session, teams may not practice more than six days in a one-week cycle. The off-day may be at the beginning, the end, or any time during the one-week cycle in question. Each one-week cycle is independent of the previous one and the subsequent one.

Pre-season/early returns: To provide the proper time to prepare for contests, student-athletes often must return to campus before the return times for the general student body. In such cases, the coaches and Athletic Office work with Student Life and Pioneer Food Service relative to dorm and meal accommodations.

Equipment: Student-athletes have access to a variety of training and athletic equipment and are asked to see a member of the athletic staff about equipment check-out procedures. Student-athletes are responsible for any equipment that they check out.

## **VII. Athletic Training**

Martin Luther College contracts with Allina Health System to provide a certified athletic trainer. This person is a well-trained professional who specializes in athletic health care. Specifically, the certified athletic trainer is responsible for the prevention, evaluation, treatment, and rehabilitation of athletic injuries. MLC's athletic trainer also has the responsibility of clearing student-athletes to allow them to return to action following an injury.

MLC has a training room fully equipped with the necessary modalities and equipment used for the treatment and rehabilitation of athletic injuries. These modalities include a whirlpool, a hydro-collator, and muscle stimulator/ultrasound units.

If a student-athlete requires taping or other treatment before practices or contests, he/she should report to the training room early enough to allow for this treatment before the start of practice or contest. Some treatments may require the student-athlete to make a special appointment with the trainer.

In the event of an injury, the student-athlete and athletic trainer proceed with the following steps:

1. The student-athlete notifies both the coach and the athletic trainer when an injury occurs. If the injury occurs away from campus, the student-athlete reports the injury to the athletic trainer as soon as possible.
2. After the athletic trainer assesses the injury, the athlete trainer releases the student-athlete.
3. If further medical care is required, the athletic trainer makes referrals. (Note: MLC does not have health insurance coverage for its student-athletes. The student-athlete must have their insurance coverage or be covered through their parent's policy)
4. Athletes follow the athletic trainer's directions for athletic injuries, including any prescribed treatment/rehab program.

## **VIII. Travel**

1. **Transportation:** The Knights typically travel to and from intercollegiate contests in charter buses or the school's vehicles. Only college approved drivers with their Commercial Driver's License are allowed to drive one of our buses. All student-athletes are required to travel with the team to and from all athletic contests. Permission may be granted by the head coach to allow a student-athlete to travel to or from a contest by herself/himself in her/his own vehicle, or to travel with someone else in their vehicle. Should a situation like this arise, the student-athlete must complete a travel waiver and have it approved by her/his coach or another athletic department designee. The student-athlete must indicate her/his specific travel plans on the travel waiver. If a student-athlete chooses to travel separately from the team, she/he will not be reimbursed for their personal travel costs (mileage, additional hotel nights, etc).
2. **Overnight lodging:** When overnight lodging is involved, student-athletes are not permitted to leave the hotel accommodations unless they are with a member of the coaching staff or have received permission from the coaching staff to do so.
3. **Meals:** When possible, the MLC Athletic Department makes arrangements to have meals provided by MLC's food service. When the trip distance results in a missed meal, Martin Luther College provides a meal allowance for all members of the team.
4. **Dress Code:** All MLC athletes and members of the travel party are expected to dress in a manner that represents the college in a positive way. Coaches may have specific dress requirements for their team members.
5. **Conduct:** All members of the travel party are expected to conduct themselves appropriately during travel and at the site of the contest.
6. **Alcohol/Tobacco/ Drugs:** According to NCAA and MLC rules, student-athletes, coaches, or any other members of the travel party are not allowed to possess or use alcohol, tobacco (including chew), or illegal drugs during any athletic trip.

## **IX. Social Media**

Martin Luther College understands the popularity and usefulness of social networking sites and supports its use by student-athletes with the following provisions:

1. No offensive or inappropriate pictures, comments, or language are posted
2. Any information posted does not violate college, the athletic department, or student-athlete codes of conduct
3. No pictures of coaches, staff, and other college personnel are posted without the written permission of that person or persons
4. MLC has a "one strike, and you are out" policy for any social media violations and indiscretions.

You, as a student-athlete, must remember that you are representative of Martin Luther College and are in the public eye more than other students. Please keep the following in mind as you participate on social network sites:

1. Before participating in any online community, understand that anything posted online is available to anyone in the world. Any text or photo placed online becomes the property of the site and is completely out of your control the moment it is placed online – even if you limit access to your site!
2. Do not post any information, photos, or other items online that would compromise your status as a student of MLC and a candidate for the public ministry.
3. Never post your home address, local address, phone number, birthdates, or other personal information. You could become the target of predators.
4. As a student-athlete, you could face discipline for violations of team, department, college, UMAC, or NCAA policies.

## **X. Team Guidelines**

Student-athletes at Martin Luther College are expected to obey community and campus rules regarding the use of alcohol and drugs. Any violation of these policies or laws will result in the following disciplinary actions:

1. First offense- suspension for one date (next on the schedule)
2. Second offense (same academic year) suspension for three dates (in sequence)
3. Third offense (same academic year) termination from all athletic teams for the rest of the academic year

You will be expected to practice during your suspension if your coach requests.

In addition to the rules and policies outlined in this handbook, each team may have specific rules that pertain to its members. These rules may include required dress codes; stricter alcohol policies, curfews, etc. Any additional rules will be enforced by the team captains and coaches. The coaches of the team will enforce their disciplinary actions as approved by the athletic dept.

## **XI. Multi-Sport Athletes**

Martin Luther College encourages multi-sport participation by student-athletes who have the skills and desire to play more than one intercollegiate sport. Multi-sport athletes are required to follow these guidelines:

1. Student-athletes participating during the regular season of a sport will not be required to participate in pre-season activities of the next sport if their time frame should overlap. Student-athletes wishing to participate in these pre-season activities may do so only after receiving permission from their current season coach.
2. Traditional seasons of a sport always take priority over any non-traditional season of another sport.

## **XII. Student-Athlete Advisory Council**

The Student-Athlete Advisory Council, also known as SAAC, is comprised of one member from each of the sixteen intercollegiate teams. The council discusses ideas and concerns that student-athletes have about the Martin Luther College athletic programs and work to make improvements. This group also coordinates a variety of community service projects in which all teams participate.

## **XIII. Transfer Students—NCAA rules**

If a situation arises for which a Martin Luther College student-athlete would consider transferring to another institution, the student-athlete should discuss the transfer with his/her adviser and head coach before contacting or being contacted by another institution. NCAA rules require that another institution must request permission from MLC before being able to contact a current MLC student-athlete unless the MLC student-athlete completes and sends a self-release form; this form is available in MLC's Admissions Office, Athletic Office, or online at [www.NCAA.org](http://www.NCAA.org).

NCAA rules in some circumstances require a one-year residency at the new institution before a student-athlete is eligible to participate in athletics. Concerning transfers from one Division III school to another Division III school, the residency requirement may be waived if the student-athlete would have been eligible to participate at the institution from which he/she was transferring.

## **XIV. NCAA Drug Testing**

All NCAA student-athletes *are subject* to NCAA drug testing. **It is the student-athlete's responsibility to report all medications and supplements** on their paperwork, and review it with the Athletic Training Staff. Please review the attached NCAA Banned Drug Report. You can also go to the **Drug Free Sport AXIS website** (password NCAA3), to obtain additional information on medications and dietary supplements. Dietary supplements are not well regulated and may cause a positive drug test (many are contaminated with banned drugs not listed on the label). It is your responsibility to check with the appropriate staff before using any substance.

Some medications that are considered "banned substances" include asthma inhalers (Beta-2 Agonists) and ADHD/ADD medications (Stimulants). These are permitted with **additional medical documentation from your doctor**. Please speak to the Athletic Training Staff for the correct paperwork.

Student-Athletes are ultimately responsible for anything they ingest.



## ***Social Media Best Practices for Student-Athletes***

***Created by UMAC Student-Athlete Advisory Committee***

***The UMAC Student-Athlete Advisory Committee promotes positive use of social media and encourages all UMAC student-athletes to exercise caution and consider the following when engaging via social media.***

- **Social media should be a positive reflection of who you are.** View social media as a way to build your personal brand.
  
- **Think before you post.** Take time to reflect on your post and be prepared to take ownership of your statements before sending them live. When posting a photo be aware of the possible interpretations.
  
- **Be positive and supportive of others.** Protect and support the integrity and privacy of your team, school and coaches, being mindful that you are a representative of your team and institution.
  
- **Remember that posts can impact your future.** Teammates should hold one another accountable for their online activity.

MARTIN LUTHER COLLEGE  
DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS

I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand that participation in intercollegiate athletics at Martin Luther College is a PRIVILEGE and not a right.

I understand and accept the responsibility that student athletes and coaches represent the mission of our school and uphold its values. As a student-athlete, I acknowledge the *additional responsibility* that I have in conducting myself accordingly, to comply with the rules of my team, Athletic Department, the UMAC, and NCAA.

The UMAC Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) promotes positive interaction with teammates, opponents and officials, the community, and encourages all UMAC student-athletes to protect and support the integrity of our teams, our college, and our conference.

I understand that I am a STUDENT first, and will make my academic success a priority. It is my responsibility to submit work on time, and to communicate with my professors accordingly.

I have read the Martin Luther College Student-Athlete Handbook. I agree, I will follow these rules and guidelines and will *encourage* my teammates to do the same.

I understand that failure to meet these guidelines, I could face disciplinary action from my team, Athletic Department, Martin Luther College, the UMAC or NCAA.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sport(s)

*"And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." Colossians 3:17*