

STUDENT-ATHLETE HANDBOOK

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY-NORTHERN



2024
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2025



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LETTER FROM THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

Welcome to Montana State University-Northern and the 2024-2025 athletic season!

As a student-athlete at MSU-Northern, you have incredible opportunities ahead of you, along with significant responsibilities. The Lights Athletics staff and coaches are here to help you make the most of your experience as a member of the Lights family. This Student-Athlete Handbook is your essential resource, alongside the guidance of your coaches and support staff.

All student-athletes are responsible for knowing and complying with the information contained in this Student-Athlete Handbook, as well as all Frontier Conference, National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), and National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association (NIRA) rules, and the MSU-Northern Student Handbook.

Please note that the Student-Athlete Handbook may be updated and policies may be revised as necessary during the year. Updates will be posted on the website. We recommend checking the website regularly.

If you have any questions about Montana State University-Northern or Lights Athletic program rules & policies, please ask your coach or any member of the athletic staff. We are here to support you and want you to have a great experience. Your success is our goal!

You have earned the opportunity to get an outstanding education at MSU-Northern. Make the most of it. Strive to become more than an athlete, involve yourself in other areas of campus life, and these will be the best days of your life.

In my role as Athletic Director, my primary goal is to be an advocate for each of our student-athletes. I look forward to supporting your efforts in all areas of campus life.

Best of luck in the upcoming year. Go Lights!

Christian Oberquell

Athletic Director

Montana State University-Northern

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MSUN DEPARTMENT VISION & MISSION STATEMENT

The Montana State University Northern Athletic Department is dedicated to fostering an environment where student-athletes can achieve success both academically and athletically. Committed to the principles of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletes (NAIA) and as a proud member of the Frontier Conference, we provide opportunities for student-athletes to excel in their sports while upholding the highest standards of respect, responsibility, integrity, servant leadership, and sportsmanship as part of the NAIA Champions of Character program.

VISION

Montana State University-Northern aspires to be a premier NAIA institution, fostering excellence in academics and athletics within a supportive, student-centered environment.

MISSION

Montana State University-Northern is committed to empowering student-athletes to earn their degrees through academic and personal growth, become productive members of the community, and prepare for life after athletics. By instilling an appreciation for hard work and cultivating a championship culture, we aim to be a source of pride for the university and to support the holistic development of each student-athlete.

MSUN CORE VALUES

LEADERSHIP – guiding and inspiring others to achieve their best through courage, responsibility, and motivation

INTEGRITY – being honest, ethical, and transparent in all actions, maintaining a strong moral compass

GRATITUDE – recognizing and valuing the support, opportunities, and resources available, fostering a positive mindset

HONOR – upholding ethical conduct, fairness, and respect, creating a culture of trust and excellence

TEAMWORK – collaborating with others, valuing contributions, and striving towards common goals

SPORTSMANSHIP – bring your best to all competition, playing fair, respecting opponents, and handling victory and defeat with grace



NAIA HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY

The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) is a completely autonomous association currently administering programs of intercollegiate athletics for approximately 250 fully accredited colleges and universities of moderate enrollment. The fundamental tenet of the NAIA is that intercollegiate athletics is an integral part of the total educational program of the institution. This belief is strongly reflected in the governing documents, activities and organizational structure of the Association.

Established in 1940 as the National Association of Intercollegiate Basketball (NAIB), the Association expanded to include other programs in 1952. The NAIA became the first intercollegiate sports governing body to provide championship opportunities for both men and women when the women's program was established on August 1, 1980. (Additional information relative to the history of the NAIA can be found in the NAIA Official and Policy Handbook.) The purpose of the NAIA is to promote education and development of students through intercollegiate athletic participation. Member institutions, although varied and diverse, share a common commitment to high standards and the principle that athletics serve as an integral part of education.

The NAIA embraces the concept of the student and recognizes the importance of the individuality of each member institution, the value of the conference and independent structure, and the benefits of membership in a national association.

CHAMPIONS OF CHARACTER

The vision of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) Champions of Character program is to change the culture of sport. Its mission is to provide training to instill the values that build character so students, coaches and parents know, do and value the right thing on and off the field. Research shows that the longer a student spends in sports, their social reasoning – sacrificing for the good of the team – rises.

The Champions of Character program helps participants find the balance by keeping five core values – integrity, respect, responsibility, sportsmanship, and servant leadership – at the heart of the athletics experience. Students learn to understand how the values play out in both practice and competition. Coaches are taught how to intentionally define, model, shape and reinforce the values through their coaching and mentoring. Parents learn how their behavior is key to supporting their athletes. For more than a decade, Champions of Character has been making a difference in developing athletes, coaches and parents of character.

The NAIA is committed to advancing character-driven athletics.



FRONTIER CONFERENCE VISION & MISSION STATEMENT

VISION

The Frontier Conference (FC) strives to be a premier National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Conference as demonstrated by high athletic and academic achievement; integrity in all athletic programs; sportsmanship demonstrated by student-athletes, coaches, officials, administrators, and fans; and nationally competitive athletic programs.

MISSION

The mission of the Frontier Conference shall be to promote excellence in intercollegiate athletics as demonstrated by student-athletes that succeed on the field and in the classroom and to ensure consideration of the challenges and needs of its member institutions in all sports. The FC embraces the five core values of the NAIA Champions of Character program: Integrity, Respect, Responsibility, Sportsmanship and Servant Leadership.

NATIONAL INTERCOLLEGIATE RODEO ASSOCIATION MISSION

The mission of the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association (NIRA) is to foster and develop rodeo at the college level so that it will provide educational and competitive opportunities for students.



NAIA ELIGIBILITY

As an intercollegiate student-athlete **YOUR ELIGIBILITY IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY**. Your coach and MSUN athletic department staff are here to document and submit eligibility requirements as required by the NAIA and Frontier Conference. You need to pay close attention to credit hour and GPA requirements. If you have any questions, see your coach or MSUN athletic department staff.

Entering freshman must satisfy two out of three of the following requirements before becoming eligible for participation by the NAIA:

- Minimum ACT score of 18
- High School G.P.A. of 2.00 on a 4.00 scale
- Graduate in the top half of your high school graduating class***

No Student-athlete will be allowed to participate in any practice or contest until they have met all the requirements of MSUN Athletic Training Department.

***This requirement was changed June 2021: incoming Student-athletes must have a 2.0 GPA upon entering their first semester of college. Student-athletes are urged to speak to the head coach or AD concerning any eligibility questions.

Additional eligibility requirements:

- Each athlete must register for at least 12 hours for the Fall and Spring semesters.
- **IMPORTANT:** Dropping below 12 hours will render you ineligible. You must obtain your coach's approval to drop a course.
- All student-athletes must have passed 24 hours in the previous two semesters in order to be eligible. Up to 12 hours earned during the summer may be applied to the 24-hour rule.
- Upon reaching your junior academic standing, you must have at least a 2.0 GPA.
- To play a third season, you must have earned 48 hours; to play a fourth season, 72 hours.
- Repeat Courses: There are special rules, depending on the grade earned in the previous course as to whether or not it can be counted towards the 24-hour rule. Check with your coach for clarification.

If you have a question about eligibility, ask your head coach, Athletic Director, Registrar, or Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR). If needed, they will contact the NAIA for an answer. Never ask a teammate for eligibility advice. Academic advisors do not have the requisite training necessary to navigate the complexities of NAIA/Frontier Conference eligibility.



Before you drop a class, talk to your head coach, Athletic Director, Registrar, and/or Faculty Athletics Representative. To be eligible to participate you must be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credits (the senior exemption doesn't apply if you are registered to do so). If you drop below 12 credits during your season, you immediately become ineligible to play. Student-athletes below 12 credits will be allowed to participate in practices and team events. An ineligible student-athlete is prohibited from traveling to away contests with their team.

Any MSUN student-athlete who falls below a grade point average of 2.0 for two consecutive semesters becomes ineligible to participate in a competitive event sponsored by Montana State University-Northern. A committee consisting of the AD, FAR, and Registrar will review, upon appeal by the affected student-athlete, all circumstances involved with the case.

All incoming freshmen (including home school) or transfers (anyone who is newly identified with the institution) must be cleared through the NAIA's Eligibility Center prior to participation.

MSUN Eligibility Requirement: To be eligible to participate in intercollegiate athletics, all student-athletes are required to meet standards as stated by NAIA By-Laws.

NIRA ELIGIBILITY

The NIRA allows 6 years from high school graduation (or 18th birthday if GED completed) to complete 4 seasons of eligibility. See NIRA rules for exemptions including military service, humanitarian or religious service, and COVID-19.

REQUIREMENTS FOR FIRST YEAR ELIGIBILITY

Beginning freshmen are immediately eligible unless they have taken college courses while in high school. Student-athletes with college credit must have earned a 2.0 GPA in all college credits.

REQUIREMENTS FOR CONTINUING ELIGIBILITY

Student-athletes must complete 12 credits per term with a minimum 2.0 GPA to maintain eligibility, passing grades must be earned for 9 or more of the 12 credits per semester. Of the 12 required credits per semester, least 9 credits each term must be through the main campus for which the student-athlete is competing.

NIRA TRANSFER PENALTY AND ELIGIBILITY

Student-athletes who transfer after participating for a NIRA-member 4-year are subject to the 25% transfer rule penalty. In the Big Sky region this traditionally means 3 rodeos.



The student-athlete must establish eligibility using continuing student eligibility requirements before the 25% transfer rule penalty period begins.

The following student-athletes are exempted from the 25% transfer penalty: transfers from a junior college or 2-year school who have completed a minimum for 48 semester credits (or AA degree) with a minimum 2.00 GPA; student-athletes that did not participate in NIRA at previous school; students from non-NIRA member schools; students who have graduated and transfer to pursue an additional undergraduate or graduate degree; or transfers from discontinued academic programs.

TRANSFERRING STUDENTS

There may be a situation or circumstance for which a Montana State University-Northern student-athlete would consider transferring to another institution. In such an instance, the student-athlete should discuss a transfer with their head coach (who will then notify the Athletic Director) before contacting or being contacted by another institution.

Any student-athlete transferring from one institution to another within the Frontier Conference must sit out for 365 calendar days from the date of withdrawal from the original Frontier Conference institution (Frontier Conference Rule). Any exceptions to this rule will be reviewed by the Frontier Conference "Conduct in Competition" Committee. Any appeals dealing with the committee's recommendation will be forwarded to the Frontier Conference Council of Presidents and Chancellors (CoPC).



STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

It is a privilege and not a right to be a student-athlete and all student-athletes are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that exhibits honor and respect to their team, Athletic Department, university and surrounding community for the duration of their tenure as a student-athlete. As a member of the student body at Montana State University-Northern, student-athletes must act in accordance with the MSUN Student Code of Conduct. Montana State University-Northern student-athletes are accountable to the following authorities (hereafter referenced as “governing authorities”):

- Local ordinances, state & federal laws, both civil and criminal (“laws”)
- National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA)
- National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association (NIRA)
- Frontier Conference
- Montana State University-Northern (MSUN)
- Department of Intercollegiate Athletics
- Respective team rules

For clarification of the governing authorities, student-athletes should consult with a member of the administration. Violation of any of the standards of conduct encompassed in these authorities may result in discipline as described below, as well as civil and/or criminal liability.

PROHIBITED CONDUCT

Prohibited conduct includes violation of any of the standards established by the governing authorities identified above. By way of illustration, and without limitation to these prohibitions, student-athletes must not violate any of the policies described below. These and other prohibitions are described in more detail in MSUN’s Student Code of Conduct, the Frontier Conference Manual, the NAIA Manual, and the NIRA Manual.

All student-athletes are obligated to report any violations of this Code of Conduct to their head coach or to the Athletic Director within 24 hours of becoming aware of the violation. This obligation is in effect year-round, including semester/summer breaks and out of town violations.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Athletic Department expects student-athletes to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner beyond reproach. Offenses against academic honesty are any acts that would have the effect of unfairly promoting or enhancing one’s academic standing, including, but are not limited to: cheating, plagiarism, knowingly permitting or assisting



any person in the commission of an offense of academic dishonesty, or any violation of the Montana State University-Northern Academic Code of Conduct.

ALCOHOL

Prohibited acts include: possessing or consuming alcohol if under the age of 21; operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol; misrepresentation of one's age for the purpose of purchasing, possessing or consuming alcohol; purchasing, furnishing or serving alcohol to, or for an underage person; public intoxication; violations of additional team rules regarding alcohol; consumption of alcohol in the football game tailgate lot (even if 21); or consumption of alcohol during team travel or team functions; or other prohibited acts as outlines in the MSUN Student Code of Conduct.

DISRESPECT

At all times, Student-athletes are required to conduct themselves in a manner respectful of themselves, their team, MSUN, the Athletic Department, game officials, opponents and property. Student-athletes are to refrain from disrespectful conduct as a participant or as a fan such as unsportsmanlike conduct, profane, abusive, discriminatory, racist, demeaning, harassing, threatening, or obscene expression and language; deliberate damage to equipment or property. Disrespectful conduct will be reviewed by the head coach and Athletic Director and could result in disciplinary action.

FAILURE TO MEET TEAM OBLIGATIONS

Student-athletes must complete training requirements; arrive promptly for team practices, meetings, and departures for away games and other team events; attend team functions; and otherwise fulfill their responsibilities as team members. Absences must be excused in advance by the head coach unless an unforeseeable emergency arises.

GAMBLING OR BRIBERY

Student-athletes and Coaches shall not knowingly: provide information to individuals involved in organized gambling activities concerning intercollegiate athletic competition; solicit a bet on any intercollegiate team; accept a bet on any team representing the Institution; solicit or accept a bet on any intercollegiate competition for any item that had tangible value (e.g. cash, clothing, equipment, meals); 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. In addition, a student-athlete/coach may not accept money or gifts from a "fan" for a game "well played." A student-athlete/coach must report any



person who attempts to secure information concerning situations which may alter normal team performance.

HAZING

MSUN and its athletics department have a zero-tolerance policy related to any form of hazing. All cases of hazing will be directly handled by the Athletic Director.

MARIJUANA

Federal laws prohibit marijuana use, possession and/or cultivation at educational institutions and on the premises of other recipients of federal funds. The use, possession, and/or cultivation of marijuana is therefore not allowed.

NUTRITIONAL OR DIETARY SUPPLEMENTS

Many nutritional/dietary supplements contain substances banned by the NAIA. In addition, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration does not strictly regulate the supplement industry; therefore, the purity and safety of nutritional/dietary supplements cannot be guaranteed. Impure supplements may lead to a positive NAIA drug test and thus affect the eligibility of student-athletes. To avoid violation of this standard, as questions arise, student-athletes should contact the athletic trainers and/or consult the list of banned drugs.

OTHER DRUGS

Prohibited acts include: possessing and/or using illegal or controlled substances, as defined by law; distributing, selling, or possessing with the intent to distribute; the use of tobacco products, including vaping, by student-athletes is prohibited during practice, competition or other team functions. Tobacco and vaping use on campus is prohibited. Violations are subject to the Montana State University-Northern Drug Testing Policy.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Student-athletes are highly visible representatives of the university and they are expected to uphold the values and responsibilities of the university while meeting all requirements set forth by the NAIA, the Frontier Conference, and MSUN's intercollegiate athletics program. It is important that student-athletes recognize the power of public media domains and the potential negative image that they can portray about student-athletes, coaches, the athletics program, and the university. The MSUN Athletic Department prohibits the malicious use of online social networks or any public media domain. The malicious use of online social networks or any public media domain will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action. Here are cautions and guidelines for student-athletes when using social media:

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- No photos with alcohol, regardless of who the drink belongs to.
- No sexually suggestive photos.
- No posting of obscene or sexually explicit quotes, or photos of profane gestures.
- No posting of quotes that can be interpreted in a way that may damage the reputation of a student-athlete, team, coaches, or the university.
- No use of profanity or other language which is derogatory or disrespectful to any individual or group.

UNEXCUSED CLASS ABSENCES AND POOR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Student-athletes are expected to attend class regularly and punctually, as well as fulfill course load and academic performance requirements. Failure to meet such obligations may affect eligibility to participate, scholarship eligibility and academic standing. **It is prohibited to skip a class to attend a practice, weightlifting session, shoot or pass around. Nor should a student-athlete ever feel pressure from a coach to do so.**

VIOLENCE

MSUN is committed to creating and maintaining a community in which its members are free from all forms of harassment, bullying, exploitation, intimidation and violence. Student-athletes are prohibited from engaging in violent acts, including assault on a person or property; hate crimes; discrimination or racism; stalking; sexual violence (sexual assault, rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment); or any other conduct prohibited by MSUN policy or laws set forth by the governing authorities.



DISCIPLINE

The Athletic Director will be made aware of any offenses of the above categories through the Dean of Students, Director of Residence Life, coaches, and athletic staff. Athletic Department' disciplinary process is independent of, and supplements the university judicial process. The Athletic Department may levy sanctions above and beyond those levied by the normal university judicial process, and for violations that do not fall under the rules of other authorities. Sanctions will vary depending on the type and circumstances of the violation. Failure to participate and cooperate in any Athletic Department, Frontier Conference, NAIA or NIRA investigation of a possible violation of this Code of Conduct may itself constitute a basis for disciplinary action.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Upon notification of any offense that does not involve law enforcement, the Athletic Director has the right to meet with the student-athlete and their respective head coach.

- Upon notification of a first offense the head coach will determine the proper course of action and the appropriate consequences for the offense.
- Upon notification of a second offense the student-athlete will meet with the Athletic Director and head coach to determine consequences.
- Upon notification of a third offense the student-athlete will be suspended for the remainder of the current athletic season and must apply for reinstatement.
- In the event that an offense is so severe that it is detrimental to the team and/or school, MSUN reserves the right to forgo the steps outlined herein and immediately suspend the student-athlete.

POSSIBLE SANCTIONS INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO

1. **Warning.** The issuance of a written warning or letter of expectation.
2. **Probation.** Special status with conditions imposed for a limited time.
3. **Community Service.**
4. **Restitution.** Payment for damaged property.
5. **Indefinite Suspension.** Removal of a student-athlete from all Athletic Department activities, including athletic participation in team events, for a limited period of time.
6. **Suspension.** Removal of a student-athlete from all Athletic Department activities, including athletic participation in team events, for a specified period of no less than one season.
7. **Expulsion.** Permanent removal from a team and Athletic Department activities.

TEAM RULES



Head coaches will establish team rules consistent with this handbook. Team rules shall be in writing and distributed to team members at the start of each academic year or the beginning of the playing season, whichever comes first. The head coach and the Athletic Director have the authority to impose sanctions for the violation of team rules but the head coach shall not impose the sanction of suspension or expulsion from the team without first discussing the circumstances of the suspension or expulsion with the Athletic Director.

SUSPENSIONS

Each head coach may establish additional rules and regulations with the approval of the Athletic Director.

- Head coaches have the authority to impose additional sanctions beyond those listed in this document.
- A head coach who is considering suspension of a student-athlete must immediately notify the Athletic Director so immediate and appropriate action can be taken.
- The Athletic Director and head coach will notify the student-athlete of a levied suspension.
- Assistant coaches wishing to discipline a student-athlete must first involve the head coach.
- Student-athletes must meet all the criteria/checklist prior to reinstatement.

APPEALS

It is the goal of the MSUN Athletic Department and staff members to provide the best opportunity for student-athletes to achieve success. Student-athletes have the opportunity to appeal any decision made by a coach, staff member or the Athletic Director.

Coaches are expected to provide the opportunity and time for a student-athlete to discuss a coach's decision that affects a student-athlete's participation in the intercollegiate athletics program. Every attempt should be made to resolve disagreements.

A. Appeal of a Coach's Decision. If a disagreement cannot be resolved between a coach and player, the student-athlete may appeal the decision in writing to the Athletic Director. This appeal must be made within 24 hours from the student-athlete's meeting with the head coach. In the event there is a disagreement on a decision that cannot be deferred until a meeting with the Athletic Director is held, the decision of the head coach shall stand until such time as a meeting can be arranged.



B. Appeal of an Athletic Director' Decision. A student-athlete (or a sport team or sports program) may appeal a decision of the Athletic Director, either in independently imposing a sanction or upholding a coach's sanction, to the MSUN Dean of Students if the decision affects participation in intercollegiate athletics.

The Dean of Students will review all appeals and decide based on the evidence submitted by the student-athlete. The Dean of Students may request a meeting with the student-athlete, coaches, and/or athletic administration. In most instances, the student-athlete will receive written notification of the outcome within 48 hours of submission.

CRIMINAL LAW

When a student-athlete has engaged in conduct alleged to be in violation of criminal law, immediately upon receipt of notice of such possible violation the head coach must report the information to the Athletic Director.

Student-athletes arrested for, or charged with, violating criminal law will be placed on immediate administrative suspension from involvement in team activity pending further investigation.

If a violation would constitute a misdemeanor, the Athletic Director, in consultation with the head coach, may in the exercise of their reasonable discretion lift the administrative suspension. If a violation of law constitutes a felony, the administrative suspension may be lifted only upon authorization of the Athletic Director in consultation with the MSUN Chancellor and/or Provost. In all cases in which a student-athlete is arrested for, or charged with, a felony illegal use of drugs, illegal gambling, sexual misconduct or violence, the student-athlete will be immediately suspended, and the suspension may be lifted only by the Athletic Director in consultation with the MSUN Chancellor and/or Dean of Students.

DEPARTMENT POLICIES

DROPPING OR CHANGING SPORTS

A student-athlete may find if necessary to drop a sport. If this is the case, the following procedure must be followed:

- Consult with your head coach.
- Report your situation to the Athletic Director.
- Check in all equipment/uniforms issued to you and pay for any damages or lost equipment.



If a student-athlete wishes to change sports during the season they must consult with both head coaches concerned and the Athletic Director. This procedure ensures a smooth transition, which is in the best interest of the student-athlete.

EQUIPMENT

College equipment issued to a student-athlete is the responsibility of that student-athlete. The student-athlete is expected to keep equipment clean and in good condition. The student-athlete is financially obligated for any lost equipment.

MISSING PRACTICE

Each student-athlete must always consult their head coach before missing practice. Missing practice or a game without good reason will be dealt with severely and will be considered cause for suspension from that activity.

TRAVEL

All student-athletes must travel to and from out-of-town athletic contests in transportation provided by MSUN, unless previous arrangements are made to cover exceptional situations. Student-athletes will remain with their team and under the coach's supervision when attending an away contest.

- Student-athletes who miss the bus will not be allowed to participate in the contest unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- All regular bus rules will be followed.
- Ineligible student-athletes are not allowed to travel with the team.
- Dress appropriately.

Alcohol is prohibited on all Montana State University-Northern Athletic trips. Coaches or student-athletes found to be in violation are subject to discipline.

RELEASE FOR CLASS

It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to communicate with any instructor PRIOR to missing a class due to an athletic contest. It is your responsibility to work ahead in classes. All work should be made up at the convenience of the instructor; prior to being gone.

It is prohibited to skip a class to attend a practice, weightlifting session, shoot or pass around. Nor should a student-athlete ever feel pressured by a coach to skip a class for a team obligation.



Missing class for reasons other than illness must have an excused absence to participate. Final authority for resolving infractions of this rule rests with the Athletic Director.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is the responsibility and lifeblood of all successful organizations. It is imperative that all student-athletes, coaches, and staff do their best to communicate in a professional, clear and timely manner.

GROOMING AND DRESS POLICY

Appearance, expression, and actions will influence people's opinions of you, the program, and the college, so it is important you dress and groom yourself accordingly. Once you become a member of a squad, you have made a choice to uphold high standards expected of MSUN student-athletes.

The following grooming and dress rules will be adhered to by each student-athlete:

- A student-athlete must dress presentably at all times while representing MSUN on road trips and in the public. This may include team travel gear and/or coaches deciding what student-athletes will wear.
- Follow the expectations of your head coach, which are allowed to exceed the Department's rules.
- Request from your head coach what is to be expected to represent your program.
- University-issued game uniforms must be worn and never deviated from.
- Athletes will not be permitted to participate until deviations of the above rules are satisfactorily corrected.
- Student-athletes are expected to dress appropriately for travel and game day.



NAME IMAGE LIKENESS (NIL) POLICY

- Student-athletes may earn compensation for their NIL. Such compensation must be within fair market value and must be for actual work/services performed.
- Montana State University-Northern, the Athletic Department, and/or staff members may not compensate or arrange compensation to a current student-athlete or prospective student-athlete for her or his NIL.
- Representatives of athletics interests ("Boosters") may only compensate or arrange compensation to a student-athlete or potential student-athlete if such compensation is with a business/company in which the Booster has a direct relationship (owner, employee, etc.)
- Compensation may not be provided to a student-athlete/potential student-athlete in exchange for athletic performance or attendance at Montana State University-Northern.
- The expectation is that NIL compensation opportunities will not conflict with academic or team related activities.
- Student-athletes/potential student-athletes will NOT be allowed to use university or Athletic Department related marks and logos, including all aspects of the uniform.
- Student-athletes will not be permitted to enter into NIL agreements with gambling/sports wagering vendors or any vendors associated with athletic performance enhancing drugs.
- The use of Athletic Department facilities will require approval in advance (location agreements, including waiver of liability forms and applicable rental fees). Rental and waiver of liability agreements will be coordinated with MSUN Athletic Director.
- Student-athletes must disclose within five business days of any NIL agreements to the Athletic Department.
- The duration of a contract for representation of student-athlete or compensation for the use of NIL should extend only through participation in an athletic program at MSUN.
- Student-athletes may secure representation (agent or lawyer), ONLY for NIL and NOT for future professional athletic contract negotiations. Student-athletes cannot have entered into any such written or oral agreements for NIL prior to 7/1/21.
- A student-athlete under the age of 18 years will need to have parent/legal guardian approval prior to entering into any contract for compensation for their NIL.
- Pell Grant or need based financial aid could be impacted based on compensation from NIL.
- Those questions should be directed to the MSUN Financial Services Office.



ATHLETIC TRAINING

- Always treat the Athletic trainers and athletic training students with respect.
- If you need taped be here at least 45 minutes before regular practice.
- Treatment hours are from 8:30AM – 11:30AM, any additional treatment times must be scheduled with the Athletic trainer.
- Pick up after yourself. Put it back if you get it out.
- Do not wear cleats/spikes into the training room at all.
- No loitering - do not hang out with your friends who are doing treatment.
- Shower quickly after practice and before coming into the training room to receive any post-practice treatment.
- Dress properly when entering the training room.
- You must sign into the treatment log on the computer before receiving any rehabilitation or modalities.
- Keep conversations appropriate and noise level appropriate.

ATHLETIC TRAINING ROOM HOURS

FALL/SPRING SEMESTER

Monday - Friday

8:30am-11:30am	Treatment/Evaluation Hours / Physical Therapy
1:00pm-4:00pm	Pre-Practice Taping
1:30pm-4:00pm	Treatment Hours by Permission of an Athletic Trainer Only
4:00pm-8:00pm	Practice Coverage Only (No Treatments/Evaluations during this Time)

SATURDAY/SUNDAY

Weekends we are only available for practice/game coverage. Any treatments/evaluations need to be setup with an Athletic Trainer. If there is an emergency, call 9-1-1.

FINALS WEEK/HOLIDAYS

Anyone who wishes to schedule any treatments or an evaluation during this time period will need to contact an Athletic Trainer.



MSUN SUBSTANCE ABUSE & STUDENT-ATHLETES POLICY

POLICY #1201

Montana State University-Northern is dedicated to promoting and preserving the integrity of athletics. The use of Performance Enhancing Drugs (PED's) and illegal substances is not consistent with the goals of this University or this department and will not be tolerated.

Montana State University-Northern is resolved to support positive actions designed to assist student-athletes striving to cope with escalating substance abuse problems in our society. However, we will not tolerate the use of illegal substances by our student-athletes.

Therefore, it is the policy of this University that the use of illegal substances during the athlete's competitive season is strictly prohibited. Use will be defined as:

1. Drug related charges filed by any law enforcement agency.
2. Possession of illegal substances or paraphernalia.
3. Reliable knowledge of use or possession presented by any coach or Athletic Trainer.

Any student-athlete found to be in violation of the above will be immediately suspended from athletic competition and practice for the remainder of the season. Discipline may be mitigated, at the discretion of the Athletic Director, based on circumstances and future compliance with the substance abuse policy. Compliance may include, but is not limited to, mandatory drug testing at the expense of the student-athlete. Student-athlete status may be fully restored following acquittal or dropped charges.

Policy for the illegal use of legal substances (i.e., use of prescription medications not prescribed specifically to the user) will be the same as the above.

All rules established by the NAIA regarding the use of Alcohol and Tobacco will be enforced. Student-athletes must follow all local, state and federal laws regarding the use of alcohol and tobacco. Discipline will include a minimum one game suspension unless, at the discretion of the Athletic Director, mitigating circumstances warrant reduction of said penalty.

This policy is meant to augment local, state and federal law and any existing policies required by this university, the Frontier Conference and the NAIA. Student-athletes are expected to know and follow all applicable laws and policy. This policy represents a minimum required by the Athletic Department; it is not meant to limit standards that coaches may have within their respective programs.



When the action of the student-athlete accused of a conduct violation adversely impacts the campus community as a whole, the student-athlete will be referred to the Dean of Students. Such a referral may be in addition to or in lieu of sanctions as outlined in the student-athlete Code of Conduct.

Every student-athlete is required to report his or her violations of the Code of Conduct to his or her Head Coach or to the Athletic Director within 24 hours of such violation. This obligation is in effect year-round, including semester and summer breaks.

DUE PROCESS PROCEDURE

Student-athletes may contest any disciplinary action in the following order:

1. Consultation with the Athletic Director.
2. Review by a panel of two head coaches, not from the student-athlete's sport, and the Faculty Athletic Representative. Panel may make recommendations to the Athletic Director regarding the extent of the disciplinary action.
3. Final review by the Dean of Students.

At the discretion of the panel or Dean of Students, reviews may be limited to the documented facts of the case or may include interviews with the student-athlete and others wanting to offer testimony.



DRUG TESTING POLICY

Montana State University-Northern is committed to a student-athlete drug policy that is conducive to maintaining an environment that encourages student-athletes participating in intercollegiate athletics to avoid the unauthorized use of controlled substances and performance enhancing drugs. The intent is to educate and protect the personal health and safety of each individual, as well as ensure an atmosphere of competitive equality. The purpose of this policy is to prevent substance abuse among student-athletes by implementing drug testing based on reasonable suspicion and periodic randomized drug testing. Those who refuse to be tested or fail to report for testing without adequate explanation may lose their athletic eligibility and may be subject to further university sanctions.

At the beginning of each academic year, all student-athletes will be presented with the policies regarding substance abuse to be implemented the Athletic Department and NAIA. Each year the student-athlete will be required to sign a form designated by the athletic department acknowledging the guidelines set forth by the NAIA and Montana State University-Northern. Failure to sign the consent form will result in the student-athlete's ineligibility for participation (i.e., practice and competition) in all intercollegiate athletics.

An illicit substance is one that is illegal for the individual student-athlete to ingest including but not limited to narcotic pain medications that have not been prescribed and street drugs like heroin, methamphetamine, cocaine, marijuana, PCP, or "ecstasy."

A Performance Enhancing Drug (PED) is one that gives the student-athlete an unfair advantage. The use of PEDs is a form of cheating. The use of such a drug also poses significant health and safety risks for the student-athlete and those in competition with the SA. A current list of PEDs and NAIA banned substances can be found at https://www.naia.org/student-athlete-wellness-center/2019-20/files/NAIA_Banned_Substances_List.pdf

REASONABLE SUSPICION

To be considered particularized suspicion, a coach, athletic trainer, athletic director, or administrator must observe the athlete in circumstances that make the observer believe the athlete has committed, or is committing, a violation of this policy. To satisfy the test of particularized suspicion, the evidence must be based upon a specific event or occurrence in which the athlete has been presumed to use drugs; including, but not limited to:

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- Direct observation by coaches, athletic trainers, the athletic director, administrators, or physicians involving suspicious medical symptomatic changes inherent to suspected substance abuse.
- Significant changes in behavior.
- Obvious suspicious conduct.
- Evidence reported from a reliable third party.
- Physical evidence pointing to drug abuse.
- Possession of drug paraphernalia.
- Other common signs of drug abuse as listed below:

Signs of Drug Abuse

Dilated pupils, increased sweat, nervousness or anxiety, paranoid behavior, hand tremors, weight loss, insomnia, rapid heart rate and increased blood pressure, chronic cough, sullen and withdrawn behaviors, slow verbal responses, reddened eyes, overconfidence in one's abilities and strength, sudden mood changes, unusual increases in weight and strength, hostile and paranoid behavior, and acne (particularly on the face, back and neck).

Reminder: A drug test can be requested by coaches, athletic trainers, the athletic director, or administrators who have reasonable suspicion of drug use.

RANDOMIZATION

The Head Athletic Trainer will randomly select at least 10% of each sport's roster for drug testing at least once per testing cycle. A computerized randomizer will be utilized for selection of student-athletes on the current roster. It should be noted that a student-athlete can be tested at ANYTIME during their athletic career at Montana State University-Northern regardless of season.

PENALTIES

Positive test results may be subject to a second sample to avoid any false positives from the initial test. Student-athletes will be responsible for payment of the drug testing fee if they test positive.

First Positive Test Sanctions

If the drug test is found to be positive for any of the NAIA banned substances, the student-athlete will meet with the athletic director and head coach, or designee, to review the test results. The student-athletes guardian(s) will be notified of the positive test results. The athletic director may impose sanctions at their discretion, including suspension from practice and/or competition. The student-athlete will retain eligibility and scholarships, providing they abide by any conditions set forth by the



university and the Athletic Department regarding the athlete's sanctions. The student-athlete will also be held accountable to the university's other student codes and policies.

Second Positive Test Sanctions

A second positive test indicates continued use and will cause the student-athlete to be suspended immediately. The student-athlete will be prohibited from representing Montana State University-Northern in any intercollegiate athletic event or club sport competition for at least one calendar year (365 days). This suspension will also result in the loss of all athletic related financial aid, during this time period, as well as continued accountability to the university's other student codes and policies. Parental notification will be made again at this time. In order for the student-athlete to remain eligible for future participation in intercollegiate athletics or clubs, they must abide by any conditions set forth by the Athletic Department pertinent to the student-athletes rehabilitation.

Third Positive Test Sanctions

Any student-athlete who tests positive for a third time will be subject to the ordinary disciplinary process of the university. In addition, a third positive drug test will result in permanent cancellation of athletic eligibility and the permanent cancellation of all athletic financial aid.

Appeals Process

A student-athlete who tests positive may, within five days of the test results, make a written appeal to the Athletic Director. The athletic director may have the authority of restoration, based upon the merits of the request.

NAIA Sanctions for use of Banned Substances at Championship Events

NAIA student-athletes are subject to random drug testing as a condition of participation at any championship level event. MSUN student-athletes are subject to institutional sanctions as well as the NAIA penalties outlined below.

- A. A student-athlete who tests positive for use of a banned substance, as defined by the NAIA Banned Substance List, shall be sanctioned as outlined below
 - a. As a first offense, a student-athlete who tests positive for the use of any banned substance:
 - 1. Shall be immediately suspended from further competition in all sports;
 - 2. Shall be suspended in all sports for a minimum of 365 days from the date of specimen collection that led to the positive test result;



3. The student-athlete shall be charged one additional season of competition in the applicable sport as a punitive measure (in addition to being charged a season of competition for the student's actual participation);
 4. Shall be charged one punitive season of competition in all additional sports because of the positive test result (in addition to any seasons of competition the student may have been charged for actual participation).
 5. Individual placings and honors earned at the national championship at which the positive test occurred shall be vacated.
- b. As a second offense, a student-athlete who tests positive for the use of any banned substance:
1. Shall immediately lose all remaining eligibility within the NAIA in all sports;
 2. Individual placings and honors earned at the national championship at which the positive test occurred shall be vacated

CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT POLICY

DEFINITION

Trauma induced alteration in mental status that may or may not involve loss of consciousness

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

- Headache
- Dizziness
- Light-headed
- Nausea
- Memory Loss
- Vomiting
- Sensitivity to light/noise
- Irritability
- Sadness

IN THE EVENT

That there is a concussion suspected at any MSUN athletic event, said athlete will immediately be removed from play until evaluated by a certified athletic trainer or other health-care professional.



That there is a loss of consciousness for more than 30 seconds said student-athlete must be seen by a team physician or referred to the emergency room for further evaluation. This will also be the case if there is a significant concussion history.

The certified athletic trainers on staff reserve the right to hold any student-athlete out from classroom activities such as attending classes, homework, assignments, exams etc. until we deem that the student-athlete will not be hindered by re-introducing these cognitive activities.

PROTOCOL

- Baseline Testing
- All new student-athletes will be required to undergo baseline testing that includes an
 - Should be conducted during the PPE or prior to full athletic participation
- Evaluation and Return to Play
- The following guidelines will be used for evaluation of student-athletes who have potentially sustained a concussion and for determining when a student-athlete can safely return to participation. This should be consulted with a physician or appropriate mid-level provider (PA, NP) as soon as possible.
- Graded symptom checklist
 - Will be conducted during the initial evaluation for a concussion. It can be performed in conjunction with the most current SCAT or EMR system
 - Should be completed at least once daily until symptoms resolve
 - Should be completed before and after exertional testing until the student-athlete successfully progressed through all phases of the protocol
- SCAT
 - A SCAT (most recent version) will be used for evaluation in conjunction with a graded symptom checklist after concussive events or suspected concussive events occur.
- Testing will be performed at the beginning of the school year for new students.
- Once the student-athlete is symptom free for 24 hours, the return to play protocol will begin.

RETURN TO PARTICIPATION

- Resolution of symptoms
- Graded symptom checklist must be completed with all symptoms at 0 for at least 24 hours
- Successful completion of exertional testing
 - Exertional testing will progress through the following steps



- Graded symptom checklist will be completed before and after each phase of testing
- The following steps are for return to participation for a concussion
 - Light Aerobic Exercise
 - 20-minute stationary bike ride (10-14 MPH)
 - Body weight exercise
 - 30 pushups, 30 sit-ups, 30 air squats
 - Return to weight room
 - Interval bike ride / bodyweight exercise / full lift
 - Sports Specific Exercises / Limited Practice
 - Plyo workout if out of season / limited practice if in season
 - Return to full participation

If any symptoms return during exertional testing the student-athlete should cease testing and should be monitored for 24 hours. The exertional testing will then start with the step the athlete felt symptoms at. Successful progression through all above criteria must be completed prior to return to play. Once progression is completed the student-athlete will then need full clearance from the team physician.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Mental health issues are at the forefront of MSUN's and the NAIA's commitment to student-athlete health and safety. Understanding and appreciating the complexity of topics related to these issues are key components of a holistic approach to student-athlete development. Recognizing that mental health issues are not only detrimental to performance, but disrupt the healthy function of college students, it is our desire to create a culture where student-athletes feel safe to reach out about mental health concerns in the same way one might reach out for care of an athletic injury.

MSUN COUNSELING

Free, confidential counseling is available in person and virtually (telehealth) for students to explore a variety of issues. Whether you are struggling with the changes and transitions of becoming a college student, would like to increase your understanding of yourself or others, are looking to build coping and self-management skills, or just need someone to talk to, counseling can help.

In addition to therapy, Counseling Services staff also facilitate outreach and consultation to MSUN students, faculty, staff, parents, and the greater community.

The Student Wellness Center (SWC) Counseling Services are available free of charge to all MSUN Students, Monday through Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm, by appointment only. The SWC is located in the Student Union Building, room 228.



Counselor, Student Health Services: Amber Spring | (406) 265-3599 |
amber.spring@msun.edu

Call 988, 911 or go to the hospital emergency room if you are experiencing a mental health crisis and need immediate help.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline/Crisis Counseling (24 hour)
1-800-273-TALK (8255)

National Crisis Text Line (24 hour)
text "MT" to 741741

24/7 Community Resource line
text 211 or go to: <https://montana211.org/>

LGBTQIA+ Students
text "START" to 678678

Students of Color (24 hour)
text "STEVE" to 741741

The Strong Hearts Native Helpline
1-844-762-8483

Veteran's Lifeline (24 hour)
1-800-273-TALK (8255) extension 1
text to 838255

MANDATORY DAY OFF

It is required that each head coach provides a complete day off each week from any mandatory team obligations. You may volunteer to lift weights, run on your own, practice, shoot baskets, attend injury rehabilitation, etc. Each student-athlete is entitled to take a day away without fear of retribution.



SPORTS INFORMATION

Positive exposure for Montana State University-Northern Athletics programs and the entire institution of Montana State University-Northern is the goal of Sports Information. Improving the student experience is achieved by sports information, by representing our student-athletes in as positive of a light as possible, as frequently as possible.

MEDIA

All media interviews, photos, passes, etc. must be cleared through the Sports Information Director (SID). The SID will coordinate with the requested interviewee and the media representative.

Student-athlete contact information cannot be shared with media representatives without that student-athlete's written permission (email or text).

Sports Information Director:

Sierra Woodward | 406-265-3779 | sierra.woodward@msun.edu | GYM 229C

WEIGHT ROOM FACILITY POLICY

- Safety is the #1 rule in the weight room.
- Proper exercise attire and closed-toe shoes are required. This includes shirts.
- All lifting must be supervised. An individual is never permitted to lift alone.
- All lifters must be under the supervision of the assigned instructor or coach.
- Wipe down equipment and weights.
- Always return weights and equipment to where they belong.
- Do not place weights on top of benches.
- Do not slam or drop weights.
- Horseplay or unsafe activity is prohibited.
- Food, tobacco, candy and open drink containers are not permitted.
- Immediately report broken equipment to a coach, the Athletic Director, or the Athletic Administrator.
- Understand that strength training is not only a supplement to your program but also a high-skilled activity.



ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

NAME	TITLE	PHONE	EMAIL (@msun.edu)
Christian Oberquell	Athletic Director	406-265-4109	coberquell
Cassandra Olszewski	Athletic Administrator	406-265-3722	cassandra.olszewski
Chris Mouat	Assistant Athletic Director	406-265-3584	cmouat
Robert Tate	Head Athletic Trainer	406-265-3593	robert.tate1
Taylor Tate	Assistant Athletic Trainer	406-265-3590	taylor.tate
Deborah Callahan	Head Cross Country Coach	406-399-3134	deborah.callahan
Jerome Souers	Head Football Coach	406-265-3746	jerome.souers
Dave Sandau	Co-Offensive Coordinator/Assistant Head Coach		david.sandau
Chad Germer	Offensive Coordinator/Offensive Line	406-265-4184	chad.germer
Colter Szymoniak	Strength and Conditioning Coach/Defensive Line	406-265-4184	colter.szymoniak
Dylan Wampler	Student Assistant Defensive Coach	406-265-4184	
Dominic Paribello	Student Assistant Offensive Coach	406-265-4184	
MaeLea Willis	Program Assistant	406-265-4184	maelea.willis
James Kirkpatrick	Head Golf Coach	406-265-4164	james.kirkpatrick2
Shawn Huse	Head Men's Basketball Coach	406.265.4131	shuse
	Assistant Men's Basketball Coach		
Doug Kallenberger	Head Rodeo Coach	406.265.4159	douglas.kallenberger
Emily Kallenberger	Assistant Rodeo Coach		
Jerry Wagner	Head Volleyball Coach	406-265-4112	jerry.wagner
Chris Mouat	Head Women's Basketball Coach	406.265.3584	cmouat
Sierra Woodward	Sports Information Director & Associate Head Women's Basketball Coach	406-265-3779	sierra.woodward
Tyson Thivierge	Head Wrestling Coach	406.265.3541	tyson.thivierge



Student-Athlete Pledge

Each day provides me with opportunities to live and learn the five core values and be a Champion of Character®.

As a student-athlete, I pledge to accept the Champions of Character five core values. I will do my best to represent my team, my teammates and myself while striving to have the **Integrity** to know and do what is right; **Respect** my opponent, the officials, my teammates, my coach, myself and the game; take **Responsibility** by embracing opportunities to contribute; exemplify **Sportsmanship** by bringing my best to all competition and provide **Servant Leadership** where I serve the common good while striving to be a personal and team leader.

Student-athlete's name: _____

Sports Team: _____

Student-athlete's signature: _____