

A Guide for the College Bound Student-Athlete

NAIA National Championships

The NAIA offers the student-athlete (men & women) the opportunity to compete at his/her highest level. The NAIA offers national championships for men in cross country, soccer, football, indoor and outdoor track and field, swimming & diving, wrestling, basketball, baseball, tennis & golf. Women's national championships include volleyball, soccer, cross country, indoor and outdoor track and field, swimming & diving, basketball, softball, tennis & golf. Listed below are a few items important to participating as a student-athlete in the NAIA.

Financial Aid, Scholarships, Grants-In-Aid & Student Loans

Assignment of scholarships, grants-in-aid or student loans shall be controlled by the faculty through the regularly constituted committee on student loans and scholarships.

Any financial aid or assistance to prospective students, in money or in kind, except from members of the student's immediate family or from those upon whom the student is legally dependent, shall be administered by the institution under the policies and procedures established by the institution through the regularly constituted committee on student loans and scholarships.

A member institution of the NAIA shall award no more institutionally-controlled financial aid to the student-athlete than the actual cost of: 1) tuition; 2) mandatory fees, books and supplies required for courses in which the student-athlete is enrolled; 3) room and board for the student-athlete only, based on official room and board allowance listed in the institutions catalog. Further financial assistance to a student-athlete, other than listed above, by a member institution shall be prohibited.

NAIA Eligibility Regulations

The following is a short listing of criteria that needs to be met to be eligible to represent a member institution in any manner (scrimmages, intercollegiate competitions). For more information on NAIA Eligibility Regulations, visit www.naia.org.

1. If an entering freshman* be a graduate of an accredited high school or be accepted as a regular student in good standing as defined by the enrolling institution and meet two of the three entry level requirements.

* An entering freshman is defined as a student who upon becoming identified with an institution has not been previously identified with an institution(s) of higher learning for two semesters or three quarters (or equivalent).

A. Achieve a minimum of 18 on the Enhanced ACT or 860 on the SAT. The ACT/SAT test must be taken on a national or international testing date and certified to the institution prior to the beginning of each term in which the student initially participates (residual tests are not acceptable). The SAT score of 860 or higher must be achieved on the Critical Reading and Math sections of the SAT. The SAT score of 860 or higher must be achieved on the **CRITICAL READING** and **MATH** sections of the SAT. Scores must be achieved on a single test.

B. Achieve a minimum overall high school grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale

C. Graduate in the top half of your high school graduating class

2. YOU MUST be making normal progress toward a recognized baccalaureate degree and maintain the grade points required to remain a student in good standing, as defined by the institution you are attending.

3. YOU MUST be identified and enrolled in 12 credit hours at the time of participation. Should participation take place between terms, you must have been identified with the institution the term immediately preceding the date of participation.

4. YOU MUST, if a second term freshman, have accumulated a minimum of nine institutional credit hours BEFORE identification for the second term of attendance.

5. YOU MUST have accumulated a minimum of 24 institutional credit hours the two immediately previous terms of attendance. Up to 12 institutional credit hours earned during the summer and/or non-term may be applied to meet the 24-hour rule, provided such credit is earned AFTER one of the two immediately previous terms of attendance.

However, if you are transferring from a two-year institution, and if you have not been identified with an institution of higher learning for more than five semesters or seven quarters, have been identified with a four-year institution, and have met graduation requirements for an associate degree from a junior college, you may be exempt from the 24-hour rule for the first term you are enrolled at an NAIA member institution. You must have passed all hours required for graduation and, in the last two terms of attendance, you must have needed fewer than 24 hours to complete graduation requirements.



6. YOU MAY NOT count repeat courses previously passed in ANY term toward the 24 hour rule.
7. YOU MUST be eligible according to your affiliated conference standards.
8. YOU MUST, if a transfer student from a four-year institution, have eligibility remaining at the institution from which you are transferring to be eligible for further intercollegiate competition. For eligibility purposes, the NAIA does not recognize the NCAA "five year rule" or age-limitations regulations.
9. YOU MUST, if a transfer student having participated in intercollegiate athletics at a four-year institution, reside for 16 consecutive calendar weeks, (112 calendar days), not including summer sessions, at the transferred institution before becoming eligible for intercollegiate competition in any sport in which you participated while attending the previous four-year institution. Exceptions to the 16 calendar weeks' residency will be explained by the institution's faculty athletics representative.
10. YOU MUST be within your first 10 semesters, 12 trimesters, or 15 quarters of attendance as a regularly enrolled student. Beginning August 1, 2004, a term of attendance is any semester, trimester, or quarter in which you enroll for 12 or more institutional credit hours and attend any class. Summer sessions are not included, but night school, extension or correspondence courses are applicable to this ruling.
11. YOU MUST, upon reaching junior academic standing as defined by the institution, have a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.0 on a 4.0 scale as certified by the institutional registrar.
12. YOU MUST, to participate the second season of sport, have accumulated at least 24 semester/36 quarter institutional credit hours.
13. YOU MUST, to participate the third season in a sport, have accumulated at least 48 semester/72 quarter institutional credit hours.
14. YOU MUST, to participate the fourth season in a sport, have accumulated at least 72 semester/108 quarter institutional credit hours. These hours must include at least 48 semester/72 quarter hours in general education and/or your major field of study.
15. YOU MUST, to participate the third and/or fourth season in a sport, have and maintain a total cumulative grade point average of at least 2.0 on a 4.0 scale.
16. YOU MAY NOT participate for more than four season in any one sport. A season of competition is defined as participation in one or more intercollegiate contests, whether as a freshman, junior varsity, or varsity participant or in any other athletic competition in which the institution is represented during a sport season or participation in any competition or training for which the participant receives compensation including remuneration for expenses after September 1 in the year of high school graduation or equivalent.
17. Should you participate for two different institutions in the same sport in the same academic year (example - basketball or fall golf at a junior college and then transfer to an NAIA school and participate in basketball or spring golf), you shall be charged with two seasons of competition in that sport, unless you earned an associate degree at a junior college in the term immediately preceding the transfer.
18. YOU MUST be an amateur, as defined by the NAIA, in the sport(s) in which you participate. See your athletics director or faculty athletics representative for all amateur regulations as printed in the NAIA Bylaws.

**Remember, athletes as well as member institutions are responsible for knowing and abiding by NAIA rules and regulations as outlined in the NAIA Official Handbook. See your athletics director or faculty athletics representative for all NAIA rules and regulations.*

Hardships

Hardships deal only with season of competition. A hardship request is a request for an exception to the season of competition regulation (see item 16 above). Hardship requests will be considered only if the following criteria are met:

1. The injury or illness is beyond the control of the student-athlete and/or coach, and incapacitates that student-athlete from competing further during the sport season as verified by an M.D. or D.O. who must have examined the student during the sport season in question.
2. Participation after being examined by a physician and before receiving written medical clearance shall nullify hardship consideration.
3. The athlete shall not have participated in more than the Association's allowable number of contests or dates, excluding scrimmages, recognized by the NAIA during the sports season. Contact a member institution for the hardships.



NAIA Advantages

There are many advantages to competing in NAIA sports. Beside the benefit of close-knit communities and small class sizes on the typical NAIA campus, NAIA athletics offer:

- ♦ Maximum opportunity to participate in regular season contests and National Championships
- ♦ Greater opportunities to transfer without missing a season
- ♦ Fewer recruiting restrictions
- ♦ Focus on the education and character development of the student-athlete

The NAIA recruitment process is less cumbersome, with fewer restrictions on the contact between a student-athlete and a coach. More frequent communication aids in assuring that the student-athlete is comfortable with the choice of an institution. In the event the student-athlete feels that the school or team is not the right fit, he/she can transfer to another NAIA institution and compete the next season without sitting out a year. While NAIA rules hold to strict academic requirements, the process of establishing eligibility is streamlined since there is no clearinghouse. We hope you strongly consider enrolling at an NAIA member institution.

Recruitment of an Enrolled Student-Athlete

Once you have started your overall college experience by enrolling and/or attending classes any postsecondary institution, representatives from an NAIA institution cannot initiate contact with you. Even if you have not started classes yet, but have drawn equipment and begun organized practice, no one representing an NAIA school can initiate any communication with you.

Once you have become identified with a postsecondary institution, there are some things to know should you ever want to consider transferring to an NAIA member institution. Because the NAIA institution cannot contact you, you'll probably want to contact them. If you do, the NAIA institution cannot respond to your contact until the athletics director or faculty athletics representative at that institution has notified, in writing, the athletics director or faculty athletics representative at the school which you are enrolled. The NAIA institution has 10 days from your contact to write that letter. The NAIA institution does not necessarily need to receive permission to respond to your contact, but they must notify your identified school as described.

Champions of Character

The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) *Champions of Character* program is designed to instill an understanding of character values in sport and provide practical tools for student-athletes, coaches and parents to use in modeling exemplary character traits. The five core values of *Champions of Character* include: *responsibility, respect, servant leadership, integrity and sportsmanship*. For more information on *Champions of Character*, visit www.championsofcharacter.org.

For more information, visit www.naia.org



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