

OHIO UNIVERSITY

CHEERLEADING

Policies & Commitment

Introduction

Welcome to the Ohio University Cheerleading Program. As a member of the program you automatically become a representative of it as well as the University. To insure that you, the program and the University are all represented in a positive manner, we have established the following guidelines in determining your conduct, academic achievement and performance. These policies have been designed to open and facilitate communication between the Coaching Staff and the team. Students that are selected for the Ohio University Cheerleading team must be in agreement with the established guidelines before signing on as a member. They must also adhere to these guidelines during their tenure in the program.

Purpose

I. The members of the Ohio University Cheerleading Program shall dedicate themselves to the following:

- Get the best education possible, graduate from Ohio University and use your degree to be a productive person in society
- Providing support for the athletic teams during home and away games
- Promoting a “Collegiate” atmosphere for the athletic teams and in doing so, improving student and fan morale
- Developing and promoting loyalty toward Ohio University
- Participating in various Ohio University and community events to further the recognition and respect of Ohio University and the Cheerleading Program
- Participating in fundraising activities as appropriate to support the Cheerleading Program

II. The responsibility of the Coaching Staff is to assist you in the above purpose by:

- Monitoring your classes with progress toward your desired degree
- Giving you the opportunity to expand your cheerleading skills through various forms of training
- Monitoring your activities and placing you in a proper environment so that you will be afforded every opportunity to enjoy your stay at Ohio University

III. Code of Conduct

- Each member is representing the University at ALL times and must carry him or herself in a professional manner
- Cheerleading team members at Ohio University are expected to be decent individuals with the ability to ascertain right from wrong as well as be law

abiding. This expectation is most important when it comes to drugs, alcoholic beverage and nicotine. Team members understand that, especially while in uniform their actions and behavior are under constant scrutiny and observation

- Disrespecting any member of the Coaching Staff or any other member of the Cheerleading team will result in disciplinary actions up to and including dismissal from the team
- Consumption of alcoholic beverages: Bars are off limits the day or night before a game or competition. **All bars are off limits on road trips!**
There will be absolutely no drinking of alcohol on road trips!
UNDERAGE DRINKING WILL NOT BE TOLERATED AND IS CAUSE FOR IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL FROM THE TEAM!, If you cannot refrain from drinking alcohol, then you will not be permitted to travel. **Traveling is a privilege, not a right!!!**
- We are against the partaking of any drugs not prescribed by a physician. We do not approve under any circumstances. You will be randomly drug tested at Ohio University. **Violation of this will result in disciplinary action up to and including DISMISSAL from the team!**
- The use of any tobacco products is strictly prohibited during University functions
- Your social life and activities are part of your personal life. In general, we have no desire to interfere in any aspect. However, if your social activities appear to hinder your classroom or athletic performance, we feel obligated to take measures to correct the issues at hand
- There is a NO DATING policy among members of the team. Violation of this policy will result in the member with the least amount of seniority being dismissed from the team
- Never wear official Ohio University Cheerleading apparel when socializing on your own time.
- Vulgar language or suggestive gestures will NOT be tolerated, plus be sensitive to other ethnic backgrounds by showing respect - violations will result in disciplinary action
- Dress clean, neat and in appropriate attire at all times (no suggestive clothing will be tolerated, men or women)
- No wearing other collegiate team apparel, you represent OHIO
- Haircuts are a part of your general grooming, keep it neat and stay away from extremes (Facial hair – clean shaven is preferred)
- Body art can not be visible at any time while representing Ohio University
- **“Dismissal At Will”**: The coaching staff reserves the right to dismiss a team member without going through the disciplinary action process
- If you quit the Cheerleading team, you will not be able to try out again
- Any member carrying an out-standing debt will be given a deadline to clear their balance, if the balance has not been rectified then a lien will be placed on your University account, this means that you will not be able to register for class, request your transcript, or try out again until the entire debt is paid off

IV. Time Commitment

- Responsibilities include: (This includes giving up all or part of your Winter Break for possibility of Bowl Game, basketball games, Spring Break for NCAA tournament basketball games and Nationals Practice and some weekends)
 - i. Cheer at all home football games
 - ii. Cheer at out-of-town football games (6 cheerleaders, selected by the coaching staff)
 - iii. Cheer at all men's basketball games, including MAC Tournament and NCAA or NIT Tournament
 - iv. Cheer at all women's basketball games, including MAC Tournament and NCAA or NIT Tournament (the number of cheerleaders will depend on how many the Athletic Director determines)
 - v. Public appearances on and off campus
 - vi. National Cheerleading Championship Competitions
 - vii. Homecoming festivities
 - viii. Fundraising activities
 - ix. Weekly practices and conditioning
- You are making a commitment to attend all the listed events, plus special appearances that are scheduled each week during the year
- Must attend all practices. Practices will run efficiently and will start promptly at their scheduled time

V. Academics

- School is the reason you are here, and school will be your number one priority, your second priority is Cheerleading
- You must be enrolled in 12 credit hours per semester
- You must maintain at least a 2.0 cumulative grade point average (Set your personal goal HIGHER!)
- Any blatant disrespect for teachers, administrators, classroom attendance and responsibilities, academic honesty or poor motivation academically will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the team
- Once you are on the Cheerleading Team, you are considered a student athlete. This allows you access to tutors, computers and other resources on the forth floor of Peden Stadium (see the coaching staff for further details)
- As a team member you will have priority scheduling for classes. This allows you to schedule your classes early and around your cheerleading schedule, such as practices

VI. Practice Schedules

- All practices are mandatory unless otherwise noted by the Head Coach
- Proper attire is required for all practices (green and white Ohio apparel), this means NO other college team apparel is to be worn
- You must come to practice dressed and ready to start at the designated start time
- Practices will be held 2-3 times a week. Additional practices may be scheduled for those team members participating on the National Team
- Physical training sessions will be done at least 2 times a week. Workout sessions will be held primarily in the mornings before classes.
- If a member is going to be late or absent due to illness, they must notify the coaching staff at least 2 HOURS PRIOR to the start of practice. Calls from parents are NOT acceptable!
- NO cheerleader may leave a game or practice without permission from the coaching staff

VII. Game & Appearance Schedules

- You are to arrive to Games 90 minutes prior to kick off or tip off
- Only skills that have been evaluated at practice will be allowed to be performed on the day of the game, skill assessments will be done by the coaching staff on a weekly basis
- NO public display of affection during games or events
- NO chewing gum or jewelry (including tongue and or belly button piercing) will be allowed during practice, scheduled games, or events
- No excess talking/goofing off
- Good sportsman like conduct at all times
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VIII. Tardiness, Excused and Unexcused absences

- All practices, games and events are mandatory unless otherwise noted by the Head Coach
- Approved absences include, but are not limited to: (final decision will be made by the Head Coach)
 - i. Death
 - ii. Wedding
 - iii. School related (A note must be provided)
- Unexcused absences include, but are not limited to: (final decision will be made by the Head Coach)
 - i. Study groups
 - ii. Work
 - iii. Family vacations
 - iv. Rush/fraternity or sorority commitments
- Tardiness/Unexcused Absences:
 - i. Two (2) Unexcused absences will result in dismissal from the squad
 - a. 5+ minutes late equals one (1) Late
 - b. Two (2) "late" equals one (1) Unexcused absence

- c. 45+ minutes late equals one (1) Unexcused absence, but it will be taken into consideration if you show up to practice instead of not being present at all

IX. Sickness or Injuries

- Injuries and/or sickness will be reported immediately to the coaching staff and/or trainers
- Only cheer related injuries will be treated by the training staff
- Personal insurance is required by all team members. All members are expected to provide proof of insurance
- If a doctor recommends that a team member should miss any time from cheerleading due to illness or injury, a note must be given to the Head Coach
- More complete information on injury/illness can be obtained in the Ohio Athletic Department, athletic training office

X. Physical Qualifications & Safety

- Cheerleading is a strenuous and physically demanding activity. The Ohio University Cheerleading program is committed to promotion and fostering healthy lifestyles and eating habits for squad members. Conduct which opposes this philosophy and/or conduct which poses unacceptable risk and disregard for health, safety and welfare of squad members is in violation of this policy. This violation will result in counseling and/or disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the team
- Male cheerleaders must have sufficient strength to base pyramids and to lift, hold, throw and catch females safely
- Female cheerleaders must maintain the appropriate physical conditioning so they can be lifted, held, thrown and caught safely
- The weight and physical ability of team members during the season should not fluctuate significantly from around the time of tryouts. The coaching staff and/or trainer will provide resources to develop a healthy plan for maintaining an appropriate body structure
- The increased athletic activity in Cheerleading has resulted in an increased concern for safety. Cheerleading involves a variety of gymnastics, motions, partner stunts, rotations, pyramids, dance, turns and heights: participation on the Cheerleading team will involve a certain amount of danger of personal injury. Members are placed on notice that improper conduct of cheerleading may result in catastrophic injury, paralysis or even death
- Each squad member must be aware that body piercing with any types of objects can be dangerous to the individual and fellow team members. Body piercing must not be exposed during practices, games and/or events

XI. Uniforms & Equipment

- You will be responsible for all equipment issued to you. Equipment is only to be worn at games, competitions or other events specified by the coaching staff
- Uniforms and all accessories will be checked out at the beginning of the year and returned at the conclusion of the year
- All uniforms are property of Ohio University. Any uniform or equipment that is lost or unaccounted for will be the responsibility of the person to whom it was issued
- Equipment is to be kept clean and in good condition

XII. Travel

- Travel to away games will be in accordance with budget restrictions and are in accordance with the Mid American Conference (MAC), NCAA and University rules and regulations
- Traveling as an Ohio University Cheerleader is a privilege! While traveling, the team member's behavior will be professional. Behavior by team members that is unruly, includes harsh language or is discordant, rude, rowdy, rough or boisterous will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary action
- All members are eligible to travel however when a limited amount are required to travel, the coaching staff will choose by seniority, required skills and previous behavior
- All traveling team members must arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the scheduled departure time in the appropriate dress and in the appropriate uniform as designated by the coaching staff
- Members are required to travel to events as a group and are expected to return as a group
- Room assignments will be given by the Coach or administrator that is traveling with the team. There are to be NO changes to these assignments
- If a team member wants to leave with parents, a signed release letter must be in the Head Coaches office one week prior to departure. A student that is leaving MUST be picked up by a parent or legal guardian
- When traveling you may not leave the designated hotel without written permission from the Administrator over you. There will also be a curfew which will be set and enforced

XIII. National Competition Squad

- National Competition is a reward and a privilege, NOT A RIGHT!
- The coaching staff will determine what competition the team will attend
- The Competition team will be selected by the coaching staff based on attitude and ability
- Each member of the Competition team MUST attend every practice to be a part of the team. There are NO EXCEPTIONS, if you can not commit to this you will be replaced

- All members of the team are eligible for the Competition squad. However only 8 girls, 12 guys and 2 alternates will be chosen to represent Ohio University at the competition
- Additional practices will be scheduled on an as needed basis, these will also be mandatory
- Ohio University may help defray the cost of nationals but the Competition team will be responsible for fundraising the majority of the money
- All Competition team members are required to sign and adhere to the competition contract policies. Failure to comply will result in removal from the Competition team
- The Competition team may be responsible for covering the cost of meals associated with competition travel
- Special fundraising events may be planned throughout the year to help defray the cost. Each member may be responsible for any cost associated with competing if fundraising and budget do not cover it
- If you quit the team prior to the national competition, you will be required to pay back any money that has been invested in you and/or the team that is not refundable

XIV. Equal Opportunity

- The Ohio University Cheerleading Program shall not deny any person because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin or sexual orientation if otherwise qualified

XV. Changes

- These policies represent the current expectations of the Ohio University Cheerleading Program. The Coaching Staff reserves the right to make any changes to the policy it deems necessary. Any changes will be provided in writing to all team members prior to implementation

Ohio University Cheerleading Policy Commitment Form 2005 – 2006

Name: _____

Parent(s) Name: _____

Summer Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell: _____

*School E-mail Address: _____

*Secondary E-mail Address: _____

*AIM/Messenger Screen Name: _____

*** Coaches & Captains will use email and AIM to contact you. It is your responsibility to check your e-mail!**

_____ **(Initial)** I authorize the Ohio University Cheerleading Coaching Staff to verify that I am a current student or that I am in the process of being admitted and to verify any of the above information deemed necessary.

_____ **(Initial)** I have read the constitution and fully understand the rules and my obligations to the team. I have no questions or concerns over any of the written material. If any of these rules are broken, I will take the penalty given, and I will understand if removal from the team occurs. I will pay all fees charged if I quit or am removed from the team.

_____ **(Initial)** I hereby release Ohio University, their employees, designees and/or agents, from any liability arising out of the Ohio University Cheerleading practices and/or performances during the school year. I am also aware that my participation may subject me to minor, serious, permanent or catastrophic injuries.

Signature of Cheerleader

Date

***Under the Age of 18 - Parent Signature**

Date