

Rule 3

ELIGIBILITY

3.1 Student-Athlete. The term “student-athlete” as used in this section is the same as defined by NCAA Bylaw 12.02.5.

3.2 Eligibility for Regular Season Competition and NCAA Championships. Except where this Handbook establishes additional requirements or standards, Mountain West Conference rules governing financial aid, recruiting and transfer are consistent with those of NCAA Bylaws 13-15.

3.2.1 Nonqualifiers. The provisions in this section shall apply to Mountain West Conference and non-Mountain West Conference Sports. (Adopted June 2002; revised November 2002 and June 2003)

3.2.1.1 High School. Beginning with the 2003-04 academic year nonqualifiers as defined by the NCAA, whose first full-time collegiate enrollment occurs at a Mountain West Conference institution, shall be permanently ineligible for practice and competition at any Mountain West Conference institution.

3.2.1.2 Two-Year College Transfers. A nonqualifier who transfers to a Mountain West Conference institution from a two-year college shall be eligible for competition, practice and financial aid provided the following conditions are met:

- a. The student has graduated from the two-year college earning an associate of arts degree or its equivalent;
- b. The student has satisfactorily completed a minimum of 48-semester or 72-quarter hours of transferable degree credit acceptable toward any baccalaureate degree program at the certifying institution;
- c. The student has attended a two-year college as a full-time student for at least three semesters or four quarters (excluding summer terms);
- d. The student has a cumulative grade-point average of at least 2.0, and
- e. The student has met all applicable NCAA progress toward degree and transfer rules as well as any applicable Conference rules.

3.2.1.3 Four-Year College Transfers. A nonqualifier who transfers to a Mountain West Conference institution from a four-year college shall be eligible for competition, practice and financial aid provided the following conditions are met:

- a. The student has satisfactorily completed a minimum of 48-semester or 72-quarter hours of transferable degree credit acceptable toward any baccalaureate degree program at the certifying institution;
- b. The student has attended a four-year college as a full-time student for at least four semesters or six quarters (excluding summer terms);
- c. The student has a cumulative grade-point average of at least 2.0, and
- d. The student has met all applicable NCAA progress toward degree and transfer rules as well as any applicable Conference rules. (Revised November 2002)

3.2.1.3.1 Exception – International Students. A nonqualifier who transfers to a Mountain West Conference institution after having spent at least one academic year at a foreign institution receives an exception to Rule 3.2.1.3 provided the only item missing from his or her high school academic record is a standardized test score (i.e., ACT or SAT) as certified by the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse. All other NCAA initial eligibility requirements must be met. (Revised December 2003).

3.2.1.4 Transfer – 4-2-4. A nonqualifier who attends a four-year collegiate institution, transfers to a two-year collegiate institution and then to the certifying institution shall be eligible immediately if the following conditions are met:

- a. At least one calendar year has elapsed since the student's departure from the previous four-year institution.
- b. The student earned a minimum of 24-semester or 36-quarter hours of transferable degree credit with a minimum cumulative grade-point of 2.0.
- c. The student graduated from the two-year college (earned an associate of arts degree).
- d. This provision applies to a student who initially enrolled at a Mountain West Conference institution, transfers to a two-year college and then transfers back to the previous Mountain West Conference institution and meets the conditions set forth in a-c above. If the student transfers to a second Mountain West Conference institution after attendance at the two-year institution, the intra-conference transfer rule shall apply. (Revised December 2003).

3.2.1.4.1 Transfer – 2-4-4 and 4-2-4-4. A nonqualifier who is a 2-4-4 or 4-2-4-4 transfer and who has earned an associate of arts degree prior to transfer to the MWC institution meets the associate of arts degree requirement and would be eligible upon transfer to an MWC institution provided the student-athlete meets all other MWC and NCAA transfer and academic requirements. (Adopted April 2004).

3.2.1.5 Partial Approval of NCAA Initial Eligibility Waivers. A student-athlete who is granted partial approval of an NCAA initial eligibility waiver (previously referred to as a partial qualifier) shall be permitted to compete for a Mountain West Conference institution after all NCAA initial eligibility waiver requirements and applicable progress toward degree requirements are met. (Adopted October 2007).

3.3 Eligibility Forms and Procedures

3.3.1 Historical Report. An historical report shall be prepared by each member institution for every first-time freshman, transfer or re-entering student-athlete prior to the time the student-athlete first reports for practice. The form must be completed and signed by the appropriate institutional official (compliance officer or faculty athletics representative) prior to the student-athlete's first competition. These forms shall be retained by the member institution and shall be available to the Conference upon request.

3.3.2 Squad List. A squad list shall be compiled prior to the first day of competition for each team that the member institution sponsors as a part of its intercollegiate athletics program and shall be signed by the appropriate institutional official (compliance officer, faculty athletics representative and/or director of financial aid). Squad lists shall be revised to cover any changes made to a squad prior to the competition of any student-athlete added to the list and shall be signed by the appropriate institutional official. Squad lists shall be forwarded to the Conference office twice a year; once prior to

a team's first competition and once at the end of the academic year or the completion of the season, whichever is later.

3.4 Minimum Grade-Point Average for Competition. To be eligible for competition, a Mountain West Conference student-athlete shall meet the grade-point average requirements set forth by the NCAA. (Revised June 2005)

3.4.1 Eligibility Between Terms. Certification of a student-athlete's eligibility between terms shall take place in accordance with applicable NCAA rules. Student-athletes participating in football bowl games between terms must be certified in accordance with applicable NCAA rules prior to being permitted to compete on behalf of the institution in the football bowl game. (Revised July 2003, August 2003 and June 2005)

3.4.1.1 Exception. An institution that participates in a football bowl game that occurs within three working days after the final date the institution's grades are due shall receive an exception to the certification between terms provision. Institutions that meet the conditions of the exception shall have certified all football student-athletes at the start of that academic year. (Revised December 2003)

3.5 Medical Hardship Waivers. A student-athlete may request and be granted an additional season of competition by the Conference for injury or illness in accordance with NCAA Bylaw 14.2.4. The request for medical hardship waiver shall be submitted to the Conference office by a staff member (i.e., faculty athletics representative, director of athletics, senior woman administrator, compliance coordinator) of the member institution at which the illness or injury occurred. In the case of a transfer, if the member institution the student-athlete was attending at the time of the injury or illness refuses to pursue a medical hardship waiver, the institution to which the student-athlete transferred may submit the medical hardship waiver and all supporting documentation to the Conference office. The Conference office shall review the request and make a determination based on legislated NCAA criteria. The Conference office shall report to the faculty athletics representatives' designated governance group the outcome on all medical hardship waiver requests on a bi-annual basis. The faculty athletics representatives' designated governance group shall report the actions taken to the Joint Council on a bi-annual basis. (Revised April 2006)

3.5.1 Appeals. Appeals of Conference medical hardship waiver decisions shall be reviewed by the NCAA Committee on Student-Athlete Reinstatement. All such appeals shall be submitted by Conference offices. A member institution that would like the Conference to submit an appeal of a medical hardship waiver decision to the NCAA shall submit such a request to the faculty athletics representatives' designated governance group. The faculty athletics representatives shall review the request and make a determination as to whether it should be submitted to the NCAA. (Revised April 2006)

3.6 Intra-Conference Transfer. A student-athlete who has received athletically-related financial aid or a student-athlete who was a varsity athletics award winner at the United States Air Force Academy, and who transfers, directly or indirectly, from one Conference institution to another shall meet the following requirements prior to being permitted to compete at the certifying institution:

- a. The student-athlete shall complete an academic year in residence at the certifying institution;
- b. The student-athlete shall forfeit one season of competition; and
- c. The student-athlete shall not receive athletically-related financial aid during the academic year in residence.

This rule shall not apply if the student-athlete's previous institution discontinues the student-athlete's sport.