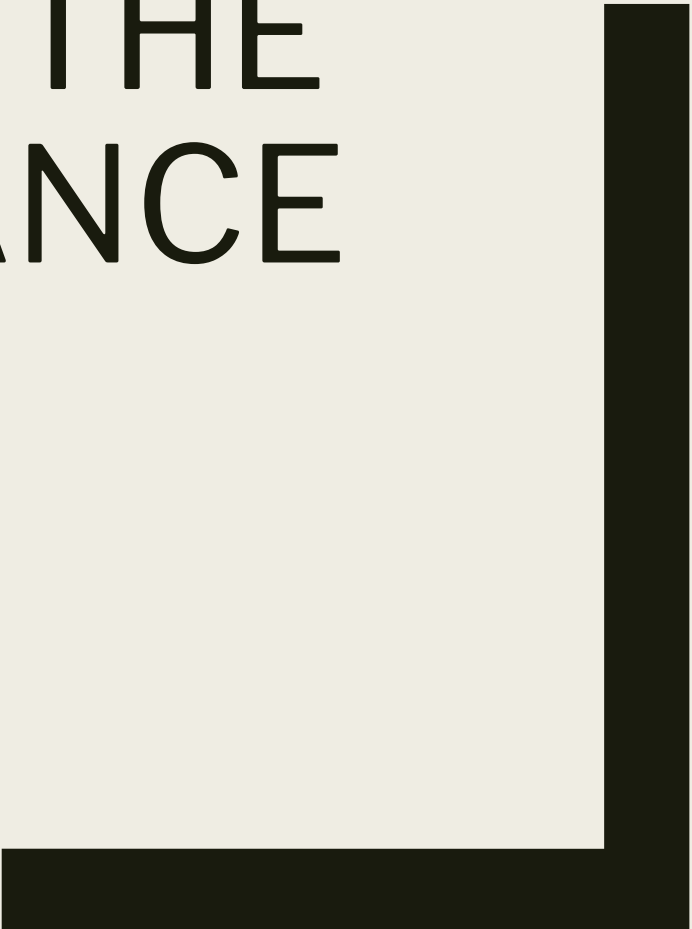




# BEGINNING OF THE YEAR COMPLIANCE MEETING

2025-2026



# The Compliance Office... Who are we?

**Noah Strebler**- Senior Associate Athletic Director for Student Services & NIL

**Ashley Chiera-Davis**- Assistant Athletic Director for Compliance

**Ernest Washington**- Director of Compliance

**Emily Bolyard**- Compliance Coordinator

# Code of Conduct

- Reporting Obligation
  - Student-athletes must report their own violations, the violations of others, and the planning of events and actions that will result in violations of this Code.
- These reporting obligations are serious. Failure to comply may result in an additional charge under the Code of Conduct if a student- athlete is subject to discipline 1) for an incident he or she did not report, 2) for a violation by another student-athlete of which he or she was aware, 3) or for a violation planned by others of which he or she was at any time aware.
- Hazing
  - VCU Athletics interprets hazing as any act whether physical, mental, emotional or psychological, which subjects another person, voluntarily or involuntarily, to anything that may abuse, mistreat, degrade, humiliate, harass or intimidate the person, or which may in any fashion compromise the inherent dignity of the person. In addition, any requirements by a member which compels another member to participate in any activity which is against university policy or state/federal law will be defined as hazing.
  - University sanctions up to expulsion.

# Why are we here?

- To provide a basic understanding of the rules that affect you as a student-athlete.
- To provide you with enough knowledge to know when to raise a **red flag**.
- To remind you to be accountable for your actions- **BE SMART!**

# What are we going to cover?

- Eligibility
- Notification of Transfer
- Financial Aid and Employment
- Playing and Practice Season Rules
- Outside Competition
- Extra Benefits
- Amateurism and Agent Reminders
- Gambling
- NCAA Drug Testing
- Name, Image, and Likeness

# Academic Eligibility... The basics.

- All undergraduate student-athletes:
  - Must be enrolled full-time (12 credit hours for undergraduate).
  - Must pass at least 6 credits per semester.
  - Must pass at least 18 credits per academic year.
  - Must choose major by the start of junior year (5<sup>th</sup> semester).
  - Must meet GPA requirements and any other institutional requirements.
- Freshman:
  - Must pass at least 24 credits in the Fall/Spring/Summer of your first year.
- Postseason competition between semesters:
  - Must pass 6 credit in the prior semester to participate.

# Academic Eligibility... PTD.

- You must meet Percentage of Degree (PTD) in your declared major:
  - Entering your 5<sup>th</sup> Full Time Semester- 40%
  - Entering your 7<sup>th</sup> Full Time Semester- 60%
  - Entering your 9<sup>th</sup> Full Time Semester- 80%

# Academic Eligibility... GPA.

- Required Cumulative GPA:
  - Entering 3rd Full Time Semester- 1.80
  - Entering 5th Full Time Semester- 1.90
  - Entering 7th Full Time Semester- 2.00

**These are the NCAA Minimums!**

# Academic Eligibility... Graduate Students.

- Enroll Full-Time (9 credit hours)
- Pass at least 6 credits per semester
- If there is postseason competition taking place in between semesters, you **MUST** pass at least 6 credits in order to participate in that competition.

# Seasons of Eligibility

- 5-Year Clock:
  - You have 5 years of enrollment to use 4 seasons of competition.
  - Your clock begins upon your initial full-time enrollment at any institution (e.g., VCU, another 4-year school, or a 2-year school).
  - Covid extensions/seasons of eligibility (Spring 2020; Fall/Winter 2020)
- Exceptions:
  - Redshirt (no competition in a season)
  - Medical Hardship
    - Must have a season ending injury and medical documentation.
    - This is applied for through the compliance office.
  - Military Exception
  - "Pavia"/Juco Waiver (as determined by the compliance office)
- Without an exception, a season of eligibility is used if ANY competition occurs.
  - Even if you only compete for one second, one contest, or a single play.

# Notification of Transfer

- If you are interested in transferring, you must submit “*notification of transfer*” in ARMS.
  - Notification of transfer may only be requested during a transfer portal window for your sport.
  - Student-athletes must submit notification of transfer during a transfer portal window for their sport. Athletes transferring to be a graduate student may submit notification of transfer from Oct. 1 - the last date of the last transfer portal window for your sport.

# Notification of Transfer

- After notification of transfer is received by the compliance office, the student-athlete's name will be added to the Transfer Portal within two business days.
- Once the student-athlete's name is in the database, other coaches are free to contact that individual.
- Once a student-athlete's name is entered into the Transfer Portal, VCU has the discretion to cancel your athletics aid at the conclusion of the current semester.
  - There are exceptions to this rule for student-athletes who came into VCU as a 4-year undergraduate transfer between fall 2023 and July 1, 2025.

# Financial Aid.

- The NCAA limits what financial aid you may receive to attend college.
  - The limit is generally the full cost of attendance to attend a college.
  - Compliance reviews athletic scholarships, institutional grants, and scholarships from outside sources to ensure that you do not exceed your maximum financial aid limit.
- It is important to report **ALL** outside scholarships to both the Compliance Office and Financial Aid Office.
- If you exceed your individual cost of attendance or team limits, your scholarship could be reduced and it may impact your eligibility.

# Reduction/Cancellation of Aid.

- If your athletics aid is reduced or cancelled during the academic year, you are entitled to a hearing to appeal the decision.
  - Official notification will be send by the Office of Financial Aid.
  - You will have 10 days from the issuance of the notification to provide a written response detailing why you are appealing the reduction or cancellation.
- The Hearing:
  - The Office of Financial Aid organizes and chairs the hearing.
  - You are permitted to have witnesses support your case.
  - The Athletic Department is permitted to have witnesses support their case.
  - Representatives of the Financial Aid-Student Athlete Appeals Committee will make the decision.
  - The Office of Financial Aid will provide written notice of the decision.

# Employment.

- If you have a job, you must fill out the "Student-Athlete Employment" form in ARMS before you begin your employment.
  - This is true for jobs secured during vacation periods as well.
- You can only be paid for work actually performed.
- You must be paid at a rate commensurate with the going rate for anyone else performing the same job with similar experience.
  - I.e., You cannot be paid more because you are a student-athlete.

# Fee-For-Lesson.

- Student-athletes can give lessons and be paid for those lessons under the following conditions:
  - You cannot use any VCU facilities (that means Athletics Department or general university facilities);
  - You cannot give playing lessons (e.g., a basketball lesson cannot be a game – it has to be actual instruction);
  - VCU has to document who received the lesson, how much was paid and who made the payment;
  - Payment has to be made by the lesson recipient (or the recipient's family);
  - If you give a group lesson, instruction to each individual must be similar.

# Playing and Practice Seasons.

- What are Countable Athletically Related Activities (CARA)?
  - Any required activity with an athletics purpose involving student-athletes and at the direction of, or supervised by one or more of VCU's coaching staff (including strength coaches).
- **COUNTABLE:** Practice, competition, any required athletic activity, strength/conditioning, etc.
- **NON-COUNTABLE:** Study hall, SAAC/community service involvement, compliance meetings, etc.

# Playing and Practice Seasons, Continued.

- In-Season:
  - No more than 20 hours per week.
  - No more than 4 hours per day.
  - No daily CARA limits during pre-season, vacation periods, and institutional holidays.
- Out-of-Season:
  - No more than 8 hours total per week.
  - No more than 4 hours of conditioning per week.
  - No more than 4 hours of skill-instruction per week.
  - No CARA during vacation periods or institutional holidays.
- YOU have the opportunity to approve your coaches CARA logs in ARMS each week.
  - If you do not approve/deny the CARA logs within 14 days of them being assigned to you, they will be automatically approved.
  - If there is an issue, say something.

# Voluntary Workouts.

In order for any athletically related activity to be considered "voluntary," all of the following conditions must be met:

- a) Must not be required to report back to a coach or other staff member (e.g., strength coach, trainer, manager);
- b) Non-Coaching staff members who observe the activities (e.g., strength coach, trainer, manager) may not report back to the coach any information related to the activity;
- c) Must be initiated and requested solely by the student-athlete (NOT required);
- d) Attendance and participation (or lack therefore) may not be recorded for the purposes of reporting such information to a coach or teammates;
- e) Must not be subjected to penalty if you elect not to participate in the activity; and
- f) No recognition or incentives can be given based on attendance or performance.

# Outside Competition.

- Competing on a team:
  - You may compete on an outside amateur team if you are out-of-season. No competition is permitted while in-season.
  - Basketball student-athletes, MAY NOT compete for an outside team during the academic year at any time.
- Competing as individual (“unattached”):
  - Open event
  - You pay for all of your own expenses (i.e. transportation, meals, etc.)
  - You cannot wear any VCU-issued apparel
- Outside Competition could affect your eligibility. So, please fill out the “Outside Competition Form” on ARMS prior to engaging in competition.

# Recruiting... Official Visits.

- VCU pays for the prospective to visit:
  - Student-athletes may be asked to be a student host and that is an opportunity to assist your program in recruiting prospects to come to VCU.
  - We may entertain the prospect within a 30 mile radius of campus.
  - There is a maximum dollar amount of \$60 per person for entertainment while on the visit. Student host entertainment may or may not be included in this amount.
    - Your coaching staff will alert you to the expectations regarding entertainment.
    - If you are asked to entertain the prospect, no cash or tangible items may be provided to the prospect.
  - Student hosts may receive meals and entertainment as normal during visits.

**No impermissible/inappropriate entertainment activities.**

# Recruiting... Unofficial Visits.

- Prospect visits VCU, but pays for their own expenses.
  - Student-athletes may be asked to be a student host and that is an opportunity to assist your program in recruiting prospects to come to VCU.
  - Student-athletes will not be provided money to entertain a prospect on an unofficial visit as no entertainment other than complimentary admissions can be provided.
  - Prospects on an unofficial visit may receive a meal while on their visit (on an occasional basis).
  - Student-athletes and staff can have contact with prospects on an unofficial visit within a one-mile radius of VCU's campus (this includes the Medical School).

**No impermissible/inappropriate entertainment activities.**

# Extra Benefits.

- Any special arrangement to provide a student-athlete a benefit that is not generally available to other VCU students or the general public.
  - Discounts at stores
  - Meals at restaurants
  - Transportation
  - Clothing
  - Gifts
  - Financial Loans
  - Discounted Services
  - Drinks/Cover at a bar
  - Anything from a booster
- Student-athletes may not sell or exchange awards/memorabilia for cash or anything of value.

\*Legitimate NIL deals would not be considered extra benefits.

# Complimentary Admissions.

- Regular Season Competition: 4 complimentary admissions per home or away events in your sport.
- Postseason Competition: 6 complimentary admissions per home or away events in your sport.
- Request your tickets through ARMS.

**Student-Athletes MAY NOT resell complimentary admissions.**

# Maintaining Your Amateurism.

- NCAA athletes are considered amateur athletes. To maintain your amateurism you **may not:**
  - Sign a contract or commitment of any kind to play professionally
  - Accept pay or promise of pay for competing in your sport
  - Compete on a professional team
  - Win prize money

# Agents and Amateurism.

- You cannot enter into any agreement with an agent to have them represent you for professional opportunities.
  - This includes written and verbal contracts
- You cannot accept anything of value from an agent or anyone employed by an agent.
- Policies regarding mere discussions with agents vary by team (talk to your head coach for specific team rules).
- NIL agents and representatives are permitted.

# Gambling... Don't Bet On It.

- You may not place wagers of anything of material value on an NCAA sponsored sport or the corresponding professional sport. (Wager = putting something in to get something out)
  - No fantasy sports/ leagues
  - No March Madness pools
  - No Super Bowl picks
- Don't provide inside information to anyone placing bets, whether you know them or not, about injuries, suspensions, or anything else that can impact a game.
  - That information is private and should stay within the athletic department.
- Betting on, or providing, inside information can affect your eligibility, up to permanent ineligibility in all sports.
- If you are being contacted/harassed by anyone regarding injury or game information, please let your coaching staff and/or compliance know.

# NCAA Drug Testing.

- Routine drug testing is done by VCU in addition to NCAA testing.
- First positive test: **One year suspension from all competition and loss of a minimum of one season of competition in all sports.**
- Second positive test: **Permanent suspension.**
- A Missed Drug Test = **Testing Positive**
- NCAA testing can happen at any time, including during vacation periods.
- Manipulation of drug test sample: **two-year suspension from all competition and loss of a minimum of two seasons of competition in all sports.**
- The most updated list of Banned Drugs is available online at [ncaa.org](http://ncaa.org).
- Always check with your athletic trainer if you have any questions about products that you want to take (medicine, supplements, etc.)
  - There is no such thing as a NCAA approved supplement.

# Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL).

- **What is NIL?** Your Name, Image, and Likeness compose your Right to Publicity which enables you, as a student-athlete, to profit (via monetary compensation or in-kind goods) from your non-athletically based performance such as autographs, endorsements, business ventures and sports camps.
- **NCAA Rules and VA state law:**
  - Student-athletes are prohibited from receiving pay-for-play;
  - Student-athletes must disclose NIL activity via the Influencer app and NILGo.com if above \$600; and
  - Student-athletes may not receive institutional NIL support services unless they disclose their NIL activity.

**If you have NIL questions, please ask!**

# NIL... Disclosing in Influencer.

- If you have not yet, download the Influencer app.
- You can log into Influencer but using the “log in with Teamworks” option.
- Select the (\$) at the bottom of the page and follow instructions to disclose. Remember – VA Law requires disclosure of ALL NIL deals within 7 days of the deal being agreed to.
- Also in the app you can:
  - Download pictures taken of you by VCU creatives;
  - View the VCU Exchange and Influencer based Global Exchange NIL opportunities;
  - Disclose NIL deals;
  - Get paid for deals executed through the exchange; and
  - Watch short NIL and branding videos.

# NIL... Disclosing in NIL GO.

- As of July 1, 2025 the NCAA requires all NIL deals with third party entities (not VCU) valued at \$600 or above be reported in the platform NIL Go.
- Athletes can register for NIL Go at NILGo.com – registration is not necessary until you have a deal that meets or exceeds \$600.
- NIL Go will review deals to determine if the deal is permissible based on NCAA rules.
- Athletes will need to include: a readable copy of the contract, compensation terms, and obligation terms. ALL information submitted must match the contract as uploaded.
- NIL Go will determine if the deal is: cleared, not cleared, or flagged for additional review.
- If not cleared the athlete will have the opportunity to: revise the deal and resubmit, cancel the deal, or appeal to neutral arbitration.
- Continuing with a flagged or not cleared deal can result in enforcement consequences including the loss of athletics eligibility.
- It is suggested that athletes not receive compensation for a deal until it is cleared by NIL Go.

**Remember – Disclosure is Required by the NCAA and state law.**

# NIL... Things to Remember.

**Institutional Involvement:** VCU, including its faculty, staff, and other representatives, may facilitate third-party compensation for a VCU student-athlete related to the use of their NIL.

**Team Activities and Academic Obligations:** Student-athletes cannot engage in NIL activities during the course of team activities, which include competitions, practices, and team gatherings and meetings. Student-athletes also must not allow NIL activities to interfere with their academic obligations.

**Facility Use:** Student-athletes may not use VCU Athletics' facilities to conduct camps, clinics, or lessons. Student-athletes may not engage in NIL activities while in VCU Athletics' facilities.

**Use of University Intellectual Property:** Student-athletes are not permitted to use VCU's intellectual property, including its athletics uniforms, trademarks, logos, or symbols, to either implicitly or expressly endorse a third party or product without the prior written approval by VCU. Per NCAA Rules, student-athletes may not sell products provided by VCU Athletics or awards received for intercollegiate athletic participation while they are a student-athlete.

**Financial Aid:** Student-athletes should be aware that receiving compensation for NIL activities could have an impact on their financial aid, especially for those receiving Pell Grants and institutional need based aid. Student-athletes are encouraged to consult with the VCU Office of Financial Aid to fully understand these potential impacts before engaging in any NIL activity.

**Taxes:** Student-athletes are responsible for all tax, withholding, reporting, licenses, permissions, permits, expenses, fees and any other obligations, liabilities or costs associated with NIL activities. For tax services and advice please consult a tax advisor. VCU Athletics does not provide tax services or advice at this time.

**International Student-Athletes:** International student-athletes should discuss how receiving compensation may impact their VISA status with the Global Education Office (GEO) prior to engaging in any NIL activities.

# NIL... Restricted Categories.

- Student-athletes are prohibited from engaging in NIL activities involving:
  - A commercial product or service that conflicts with NCAA legislation (e.g., sports wagering, banned substances);
  - Casinos or gambling;
  - Alcohol products;
  - Tobacco or electronic smoking products or devices;
  - Cannabis, cannabinoids, cannabidiol, or other derivatives;
  - Drug paraphernalia;
  - Adult entertainment;
  - Weapons, including firearms and ammunition;
  - Products or services that are illegal; and
  - Any competitor of any existing VCU sponsorship agreement.

# Contact Us!

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- **Ernest Washington**- Director of Compliance
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- **Emily Bolyard**- Compliance Coordinator
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**Our offices are located in Sports Med on the second floor!**

**Go Rams!**