

RAMS

**2023-2024
STUDENT-ATHLETE
HANDBOOK**





This handbook belongs to:

NAME _____

PHONE _____



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VCU RESOURCES

VCU General Information		804-828-0100
Information Desk	Student Commons	804-828-1981
Student Financial Services	1 st Floor Harris Hall	
Financial Aid	- https://finaid.vcu.edu/	804-828-1550
Records and Registration	- https://rar.vcu.edu/ (Official Transcripts)	804-828-1349
Student Accounting	- https://accounting.vcu.edu/	804-828-1550
Unofficial Transcripts	- eServices	
Campus Learning Center	Hibbs Hall, 1 st Floor	804-827-8108
Supplemental Instruction	Various Rooms in Hibbs Hall	
CLEP Testing	Testing Center, 1 st Floor Hibbs Hall	
Writing Center	Academic Learning Commons, 4th Floor	804-828-4851
VCU Career Services	University Student Commons, Room 143	804-828-1645
	https://careers.vcu.edu/	
Counseling Services	Commons, Room 238	804-828-6200
	http://www.students.vcu.edu/counseling/	
Dining Services – Meal Plan	1111 W. Broad St.	804-828-1148
SAEO (Student Accessibility and Educational Opportunity)	Commons, Room 018	804-828-2253
	https://saeo.vcu.edu	
Global Education Office	912 West Grace Street, 4th Floor	804-828-8471
Office of Multicultural Affairs-OMSA	Commons, Room 215	804-828-6672
Parking and Transportation	1108-A W. Broad St.	804-828-7275
Password or eID questions	Information Technology	804-828-2227
Residential Life & Housing	721 W. Main Street (Main Office)	804-828-7666
RamSafe, Security Escort Service	Campus wide	804-828-7233
RecWell	101 S. Linden St.	804-827-1100
Student Health Center	Sports Medicine Building	804-828-8828
	http://www.students.vcu.edu/health/	
Student Organizations	University Student Commons	804-828-6500
	https://usca.vcu.edu/	
VCUCard Office (lost/replace card)	Technology Administration	804-827-2273
VCU Police (Emergency)		804-828-1234
VCU Police (Non-Emergency)		804-828-1196





VCU ATHLETICS CORE VALUES



- **Drive to Excel** – passionate pursuit of the highest level of competitiveness nationally, academic achievement, social conduct, customer service and stewardship of resources
- **Student-Athlete Focus** – committed to holistic education, health, safety, equity of access and quality of coaching, support services and facilities for all student-athletes
- **Integrity** – adhering to accountable decision making, uncompromising standards, ethical values, fiscal responsibility, academic principles and rules compliance
- **Collaboration** – fostering a culture of communication, respect and transparency
- **Loyalty and Positivity** – a collective belief in a selfless and enthusiastic approach to overcoming obstacles and achieving mutual goals
- **Innovation** – cultivating creativity, originality, inventiveness and talent to maximize efficient use of resources
- **Equity and Diversity** – ensuring an inclusive climate of trust in which all people are valued and differences are recognized as an asset
- **Commitment to Community** – engaging in campus, local and regional partnerships to support and enhance the quality of life while serving as a center for civic pride



STUDENT-ATHLETE HANDBOOK



STUDENT-ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT

Virginia Commonwealth University is strengthened by the high caliber of its student-athletes, and VCU Athletics is committed to promoting that strength with the guiding principles of honesty, integrity, respect, ethical conduct, teamwork, and hard work.

A student-athlete can be confronted with many pressures while training to live up to the VCU standard. To support its student-athletes, to give them guidance and support through the challenges facing them, the University has adopted this Student Athlete Code of Conduct. Each student-athlete is required to read, discuss, abide by and refer to the contents of this Code as they live, compete, train, and study at VCU. Any questions that arise should be immediately raised with appropriate personnel until all expectations are clear.

While it is hoped that student-athletes will draw inspiration from the ethics and spirit underpinning this Code, make no mistake: These are the absolute requirements placed upon you in carrying out your esteemed role as a VCU student-athlete. Violations of this code are subject to discipline by the Department of Athletics, Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity, or law enforcement as appropriate.

Reporting Obligations.

As relates to this Code, 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. All incoming, continuing and transfer student-athletes must complete an annual disclosure related to their conduct that resulted in discipline through a Title IX or other sexual misconduct proceeding or in a criminal conviction for sexual, interpersonal or other acts of violence. Transfer student-athletes also must disclose whether a Title IX or other sexual misconduct proceeding was incomplete at the time of transfer. Failure to make a full and accurate disclosure could result in penalties, including loss of eligibility to participate in athletics.

In a manner consistent with federal and state law, VCU will share relevant discipline information and incomplete Title IX or other sexual misconduct proceedings with other member institutions when a student-athlete attempts to enroll in a new college or university.

These reporting obligations are serious. Failure to comply may result in an additional charge under this Code 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.

In addition to reporting within VCU Athletics as described above, Student-athletes concerned with the actual or suspected violations of laws, regulations, VCU policies and procedures or other misconduct should consult the university's reporting guidelines, found at <http://acs.vcu.edu/integrity-and-compliance-office/ethics-and-compliance-program/reporting-concerns/>. All crimes should be reported to VCU police.

I. Standards of Conduct

Student-athletes must comply with all applicable rules, policies, and procedures from the following sources:

- VCU Student-Athlete Handbook;
- VCU Bulletin;
- The VCU Student Code of Conduct;
- The VCU Honor System and Standards of Academic Conduct;
- The VCU Code of Ethics;
- Municipal ordinances, and State and federal laws, both civil and criminal ("laws");
- National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA);
- Atlantic 10 Conference (A-10);
- The direction or their coach, trainer, and Department of Athletics staff;
- Student-Athlete Code of Conduct.



Violation may result in discipline as described in Section IV below.

II. Good Sporting Conduct

Student-athletes at VCU are held accountable to a high standard of ethical conduct in all activities affecting the athletics program, whether as a participant or as a spectator. Student-athletes must bring honor to themselves, their team, their sport, the Athletic Department, the University, their families, and their communities, by exhibiting only the highest level of sportsmanship.

At VCU Athletics, “Good Sporting Conduct” is respect for oneself, teammates, coaches, officials, opponents, and property. It requires demonstrating self-control. It means refusing to be drawn into or encourage physical conflict not otherwise required by proper execution of the sport.

A student-athlete can take a loss or defeat without complaint, a victory without gloating, and treat an opponent with fairness, generosity and courtesy. At Virginia Commonwealth University, good sporting conduct is critical at all times – especially when you win.

“Unsporting Conduct” conduct, as defined by the NCAA, the Atlantic 10, or Virginia Commonwealth University, will be reviewed by the Director of Athletics and may result in disciplinary action.

III. University Policies Governing Conduct of Student-Athletes

Student-Athletes are first and foremost students at VCU. As such, all university policies governing the conduct of students apply to student-athletes. Student-athletes are responsible for being familiar and complying with all university policies governing student conduct, including but not limited to the following university policies:

1. Honor System and Standards of Academic Conduct ([link](#))
2. Student Code of Conduct ([link](#)) – Read the details to learn more about prohibited conduct, including but not limited to hazing, certain alcohol use, and drug use ([link](#))
3. Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy – Interim ([link](#))
4. Sex-Based Misconduct Policy – Interim ([link](#))
5. Alcohol and Other Drugs ([link](#))
6. Preventing and Responding to Discrimination ([link](#))
7. University Code of Ethics ([link](#))
8. Residential Life and Housing Guide to Residential Living ([link](#))
9. Hazing Prevention and Discipline ([link](#))
10. Employee-Student Consensual Relationships ([link](#))

While each university policy sets forth the potential consequences for a student found responsible for violating the policy, the Athletics Department may impose additional consequences on any student-athlete found responsible for violating a university policy, including temporary suspension or permanent termination of their student-athlete status.

Academic Integrity at VCU

Under the Honor System and Standard of Academic Conduct linked above, copying, cutting and pasting, using the work of others, fixing grades, cheating on an exam, and submitting fraudulent work are just a few of the types of “academic dishonesty” that can be disciplined both under the university’s Honor System and this Code. If you are struggling with academics, let a student athlete advisor know, and seek assistance from Student-Athlete Support Services. Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated and we expect you to adhere to the Honor System Pledge:

“On my honor, I have neither given nor received aid on this assignment, and I pledge that I am in compliance with the VCU Honor System.”

Neither the presence nor the absence of a signed pledge statement, however, shall prevent a student from being charged with a possible violation or from being held to the standards of the Honor System.

VCU Code of Ethics

VCU is committed to an environment of uncompromising integrity and ethical conduct and the ethical standards are the foundation for our decisions and actions. It is expected that all student-athletes adhere to the



Code of Ethics policy, which can be found at:
<https://vcu.public.doctract.com/doctract/documentportal/08DA32A740D2EFC29EA087067B123F23>

VCU Drug and Alcohol Policies

VCU's Alcohol and Drug Policy, found at:
<https://policy.vcu.edu/universitywide-policies/policies/alcohol-and-other-drugs-interim.html>

VCU Department of Athletics Drug and Alcohol: Additional Requirements

1. The use of tobacco products by a student-athlete during practice, competition, or other team functions,
2. Acts as described in the VCU Athletics Drug and Alcohol Policy. Student-athletes from each team will be drug tested throughout the year at random. Failure to appear at a drug test will be considered a positive test.

NCAA Nutritional or Dietary Supplements Policy

Many nutritional/dietary supplements contain substances banned by the NCAA. 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 NCAA drug test and thus affect the eligibility of student-athletes. To avoid violation of this standard, as questions arise, student-athletes should contact the team physician or athletic trainer and/or consult the list of banned drugs as described in NCAA Division Bylaws.

VCU Anti-Hazing Statement and Protocol

VCU Hazing Prevention and Discipline Policy

The purpose of this policy is to prohibit and prevent hazing and to discipline hazing when it occurs. It is the responsibility of all individuals associated with Virginia Commonwealth University ("the university") to encourage an atmosphere of learning, social responsibility, and respect for human dignity. Hazing is an unproductive and hazardous activity that is incongruous with the mission and values of VCU and has no place at this university, either on or off campus. This policy applies to all persons and groups associated with the university, including, but not limited to, administrators, coaches, faculty, staff, students, student organization advisors, athletic teams, bands, fraternities, sororities, and other registered student organizations. Noncompliance with this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination or expulsion. Behavior that violates this policy also may constitute a crime under the laws of the jurisdiction in which the incident occurred. VCU supports an environment free from retaliation. Retaliation against any member of the campus community who brings forth a good faith concern, asks a clarifying question, or participates in an investigation is prohibited.

As a reminder, VCU Athletics has zero tolerance for hazing.

IV. Conduct Prohibited by VCU Athletics

VCU Athletics has established the following departmental policies governing the conduct of student-athletes. Any student-athlete found in violation of a departmental policy may face disciplinary action by VCU Athletics, including eligibility to participate in team sports. Violation of departmental policies, however, affects only the student-athlete's athlete status and has no effect on a student-athlete's student status at VCU unless the underlying conduct also violates a university policy.

Unsporting Conduct

At all times, student-athletes are required to comport themselves as a representative of the VCU Athletics Department and the University. This means demonstrating professional sporting conduct in all interactions with their team, the University and its Athletic Department, game officials, opponents, and property during practice or play or at any time they are serving as a representative of the University. Student-athletes are to refrain from unsporting conduct, including deliberate damage to equipment or other property or any violation of university policy or law. Any failure to demonstrate professional sporting conduct will be reviewed by the Head Coach and Director of Athletics and may result in disciplinary action.

Gambling and Bribery

Student-athletes shall not knowingly (1) Provide information to individuals involved in organized gambling activities concerning intercollegiate athletics competition, (2) Solicit a bet on any intercollegiate team, (3)



Accept a bet on any team representing the institution, (4) Solicit or accept a bet on any intercollegiate competition for any item that has tangible value (e.g. cash, clothing or equipment, meals), and/or (5) 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.

Unexcused Class Absences and Poor Academic Performance

Student-athletes are expected to attend class regularly and punctually, and to fulfill course load and academic performance requirements. Failure to meet such obligations may affect eligibility to participate in team sports and scholarship eligibility, as well as academic standing.

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.

****Special Notice regarding Social Networking Web Sites (such as Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, blogs, and Twitter,)***

As a representative of the Department of Athletics and Virginia Commonwealth University, you are always in the public eye. Please keep the following in mind as you participate on social networking web sites:

- *Understand that anything posted online is available to anyone in the world, often despite privacy controls on the platform. Any text or photo placed online is out of your control the moment it is placed online—even if you limit access to your site. This includes information, photos and items that may be posted by others on your site.*
- *Behavioral expectations in the online world are the same as in the real world and in person. Student-athletes could face discipline or sanctions as described below for conduct online that violates university policies to the same extent as in-person conduct that violates university policies. Further, online posts may serve as evidence of a student-athlete's violation of applicable university conduct policies. For example, sharing or disseminating online a photo or video of an individual engaging in sexual activity or of that individual's intimate body parts without the individual's consent may constitute sexual exploitation in violation of the Sex-Based Misconduct Policy, linked above.*

VI. Disciplinary Process and Sanctions

The Department of Athletics disciplinary process is independent of, and supplements, the University student conduct and honor system processes coordinated by Student Conduct and Academic Integrity (SCAI). Any violation of policy applicable to student-athlete conduct may result in discipline under the Student Athlete Code of Conduct. Sanctions levied by Athletics may occur over and above those levied by SCAI. Sanctions will vary depending on the type and circumstances of the violation, but may without limitation include loss of athletics program eligibility and/or scholarship. No sanction imposed by the Department of Athletics will affect a student-athlete's status as a student at the university.

When the Department of Athletics becomes aware of an alleged Department specific violation, the Director of Athletics or their designee will take reasonable steps to verify the validity, reliability, and accuracy of the report. These steps may include interviews of students and employees, or of non-University persons having knowledge of relevant facts; examination of documents; and other steps necessary for the Director of Athletics to determine the merits of the report.

Upon the Director's satisfaction that they have sufficient information to proceed, sanctions, if applicable, shall be issued. At that time, the gravity of the violation and any previous violations, shall be a factor in determining the appropriate sanction. **Possible sanctions include but are not limited to:**

1. **Warning.** The issuance of a written warning.
2. **Probation.** Special status with conditions imposed for a limited time.
3. **Community Service.** As required by the Director.
4. **Restitution.** Payment for damaged property.
5. **Short Suspension.** Removal of a student-athlete from some or all Athletic Department activities, including athletic participation in team events, for a limited period of time up to one season.
6. **Long Suspension.** Removal of a student-athlete from some or 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/or Athletic Department activities.
8. **Withdrawal of Financial Aid.** Termination of athletic-related financial aid at first opportunity allowable





UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS



UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Title IX and Sex-Based Misconduct

Membership in a university community carries with it the responsibility for mutual trust and respect and adherence to the standards of conduct established by the community. VCU is committed to providing an environment that emphasizes the dignity and value of every member of its community. Consistent with this commitment, the university does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any of its education programs or activities, including admission and employment, and prohibits such discrimination by members of the university community. To that end, the university prohibits sexual harassment and sexual violence and conduct that aids, facilitates, promotes, or encourages the commission of sexual harassment and sexual violence. In addition, retaliation against a person for the good faith reporting of violations of this policy or for participating, or refusing to participate, in any investigation or proceeding under this policy is strictly prohibited.

Virginia Commonwealth University is committed to fostering an environment free from sexual misconduct, assault, harassment or any sex/gender discrimination that may violate Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and other state and federal laws and to maintaining a safe and non-discriminatory learning, living, and working environment for all members of the university community. To affirm this commitment, the university has developed two policies that address sexual harassment and sex-based misconduct: (1) the Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy - Interim and (2) the [Sex-Based Misconduct Policy](#) - Interim. These policies are interrelated and must be read together.

All offenses under these policies are serious and harmful to the safety and well-being of our university community. Depending on the nature of the violation, employees or students who are found responsible for conduct in violation of these policies may face disciplinary action up to and including expulsion or termination of employment.

To encourage both reporting and cooperation in investigations and in accordance with Virginia Code § 23.1-808, the university will not pursue disciplinary action based on disclosure of personal consumption of drugs or alcohol where such disclosures are made in connection with a good faith report of sexual harassment or sexual violence or an individual's cooperation in an investigation under the above policies. Because alcohol and drug misuse can negatively impact an individual's physical and emotional wellbeing, the university may still refer a student or employee for health or medical intervention related to alcohol or drug use.

The Department of Athletics is informed on, integrated in, and compliant with the university's Title IX and Sex-Based Misconduct policies and processes and proper adjudication and resolution of acts of sexual and interpersonal violence. All student-athletes, coaches and staff are educated each year on sexual violence prevention, intervention, and response. The annual education satisfies the NCAA Campus & Sexual Violence Policy requirements. The Department of Athletics will cooperate with university investigations into reports of



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sexual and interpersonal violence involving student-athletes and Department of Athletics staff in a manner compliant with these university policies.

For more information about Title IX and sex-based misconduct reporting and resources, please see <http://equity.vcu.edu/titleix/>.

The University's Title IX Coordinator is responsible for ensuring VCU fulfills its responsibilities under Title IX, including the investigation of complaints.

Malorie J. Yeaman (she, her, hers)
Title IX Coordinator and Director of Outreach & Support
Institutional Equity, Effectiveness, and Success
(804) 828-3946
yeamanm@vcu.edu

Dr. Sofia Hiort-Wright
Title IX Coordinator for Athletics
(804) 828-2184 shiort@vcu.edu

The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) within the U.S. Department of Education is responsible for enforcement of Title IX.

Virginia Commonwealth University Student-Athlete Serious Misconduct Disclosure Procedure

All VCU incoming, continuing, and transfer student-athletes must annually disclose discipline through a Title IX or other conduct proceeding or criminal conviction for any of the following Serious Misconduct:

- Sexual Violence: A term used to include both forcible and nonforcible sex offenses, ranging from sexual battery, sexual assault to rape.
- Interpersonal Violence: Violence that is predominantly caused due to the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator, including dating and domestic violence.
- Other Acts of Violence: Crimes including murder, manslaughter, aggravated assault or any assault that employs the use of a deadly weapon or causes serious bodily injury.

Such disclosures are made in the VCU Student-Athlete Serious Misconduct Attestation, issued and completed through the ARMS software. The attestation must be completed prior to a student-athlete participating as a member of a VCU Athletics sports program for the academic year.

Transfer student-athletes also must disclose whether a Title IX or other conduct proceeding was incomplete or otherwise pending at the time of transfer. Failure by a student-athlete to make a full and accurate disclosure could result in penalties, including loss of eligibility to participate in athletics as determined by VCU.

VCU will take reasonable steps to confirm whether incoming, continuing and transfer student-athletes have been disciplined through a Title IX or other conduct proceeding or criminally convicted of sexual, interpersonal or other acts of violence. The following steps will be taken by VCU Athletics:

1. Review the completed Serious Misconduct Attestation, including a follow up with the previous school or institution if the student-athlete responds to any questions in the attestation in the affirmative;
2. Review the disciplinary action section in the NCAA Transfer Portal;
3. Review the disciplinary action question in the VCU Transfer Tracer (for non-NCAA transfers);
4. Provide VCU's Equity and Access Services with a list of all student-athletes on at least an annual basis for an internal review and comparison to conduct records and files;
5. Provide VCU's Student Conduct and Academic Integrity with a list of all student-athletes on at least an annual basis for an internal review and comparison to conduct records and files;
6. Provide the VCU Police Department with a list of all student-athletes on at least an annual basis for criminal and court records search;
7. Review transcripts from the previous institution (as available); and
8. Search of internet, social media, and other publicly available resources.



VCU Athletics will cooperate with investigations into reports and matters related to sexual and interpersonal violence involving student-athletes and staff, in compliance with VCU policies. In a manner consistent with federal and state law, VCU will share information about discipline and incomplete Title IX or other conduct proceedings with other member institutions when a student-athlete attempts to enroll in another college or university.

Transgender Student-Athletes

VCU follows the NCAA policies and guidelines regarding inclusion of transgender student-athletes, which can be found here: [NCAA Inclusion of Transgender Student-Athletes](#).

The NCAA guidelines are a great resource to provide transgender students the opportunity to participate in intercollegiate athletics in the fairest and safest environment possible. Every student-athlete that is capable of competing in intercollegiate athletics deserves the opportunity to do so at the highest level. Our motto is: if you can play, you can play. VCU is supportive of transgender student-athletes participating in college athletics. VCU's policy for transgender student-athletes can be found [here](#).

Athletics Department Student Host Recruiting Policies

At the discretion of the Director of Athletics or designee, a student-athlete found responsible for violating the Student Host Recruiting Policy indicated in the *VCU Student-Athlete Handbook* will be disciplined in a manner consistent with the violations of the code of conduct.

Student Athlete Privacy

VCU's [Student Privacy](#) practices permit the university to disclose without a student's consent their participation in officially recognized intercollegiate sports and weight, height, hometown, parents' names and previous school(s) attended (for members of athletic teams). This means that, if a student-athlete is suspended or dismissed, the university may publicly disclose that the student-athlete is not currently or no longer participating in intercollegiate athletics. However, in recognition of a student-athlete's right to privacy, no other information concerning a violation of the Student Athlete Code of Conduct or other policy may be released to the public without the student-athlete's authorization.

Consent to sharing of academic progress with authorized Athletics staff

Each academic year, all student-athletes will be expected to consent to a release of student information by academic advisors to coaches and sport administrators. This information is shared with the purpose of proactively monitoring that student athletes are making proper progress towards the goal of earning their degree. Each student will consent to this through the Consent to release student information form found on ARMS.

VCU Athletics Student-Athlete Grievance Procedure

The Department of Athletics of Virginia Commonwealth University, in conjunction with the appropriate University unit, is committed to resolving all complaints or grievances brought to its attention against an athletic team, coach, department official or policy in the most equitable fashion possible for all persons concerned. It is the expectation of the Athletic Department, and Virginia Commonwealth University, that attempts be made to resolve any complaints or grievances via the informal procedures outlined below. However, if a satisfactory resolution of the problem proves impossible through the informal mechanism, formal grievance procedures may be employed. NOTE: Decisions regarding the reduction or termination of an athletic grant-in-aid may be grieved through the process set forth in the Non-Renewal Letter which must be issued to the student-athlete prior to such a reduction or termination, and in compliance with NCAA legislation.

Informal Procedure

Any student-athlete with a complaint or grievance against an athletic team, coach, department official or policy should discuss and attempt to resolve the complaint or grievance with the person(s) involved. All persons involved in the process should make every attempt to resolve the problem as promptly as possible. In the event that a satisfactory resolution cannot be reached by the parties involved, the following actions may be taken by the grievant.

1. The grievant may consult informally with a third party with whom she/he feels comfortable as a resource. Among those who might serve as resources are coaches, faculty athletic representatives, academic counselors, members of the Athletic Department administration or members of the Intercollegiate Athletic Council. With the aid of that person, the grievant may attempt to identify



- other approaches to resolving the problem. After consultation, the grievant should make an additional attempt to resolve the problem with the person(s) involved.
2. If no satisfactory resolution of the complaint or grievance can be achieved, the grievant may request that the resource person call together the persons involved in an attempt to facilitate an informal resolution.
 3. At the discretion of the Director of Athletics, he or his designee may schedule a meeting with the grievant in a final attempt to resolve the problem informally. The Director of Athletics, or his designee, may also wish to contact the person(s) about whom the complaint is being lodged.
 4. If a meeting among those involved is not feasible or if the parties are unable to resolve the complaint or grievance to their satisfaction, the grievant may use the formal grievance procedure. NOTE: The grievant is strongly encouraged to employ the informal procedure prior to taking formal action.

Formal Procedure

Should the grievant wish to employ formal means to resolve a complaint or grievance; the following action should be taken:

1. The grievant should notify the Director of Athletics of his/her grievance in writing, outlining the complaint(s), the person(s) involved and any other pertinent information.
2. The Director of Athletics, or the designee, shall conduct a preliminary interview with the grievant. The Director of Athletics, or the designee, may also wish to contact the person(s) about whom the complaint is being lodged.
3. The Director of Athletics, or the designee, shall conduct a formal meeting involving the grievant, the person(s) against whom the complaint is made and any other relevant parties. Each party may also be accompanied by an advisor.
4. Within a reasonable time period after the formal meeting, but no more than 14 days, the Director of Athletics, or the designee, shall notify the grievant, in writing, of the decision.

Formal Appeal

Should the grievant be unsatisfied with the decision of the Director of Athletics, or the designee, he or she may take the following steps:

1. Within 7 days after receipt of a written decision, the grievant should notify the Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR), in writing, that he or she wishes to appeal the decision.
2. Within 21 days of receipt of the request for appeal, the FAR shall convene an ad hoc committee of three members consisting of the FAR and two members of the Intercollegiate Athletic Council selected by the FAR to conduct a formal meeting to hear the appeal.
3. Within a reasonable time period after the appeal meeting, but no more than 14 days, the FAR shall notify the grievant and the Director of Athletics, in writing, of the committee's decision. The decision of the committee shall be final.





NCAA Rules and Athletic Eligibility

The NCAA and the Atlantic 10 Conference have strict rules that are to be followed at all times by members of VCU's Athletic Department, its supporters, and its student-athletes.

Violations of these rules in any fashion, regardless of the level of fault on the part of the student-athlete, **result in immediate loss of eligibility from athletic participation.**

[NCAA](#) or Atlantic 10 rules (not published by the Atlantic 10 but available upon request) that you, the student-athlete, **must adhere to** include the following:

- You cannot accept cash, prizes, non-personalized merchandise awards, gift certificates, travel expenses or a salary for your participation in outside competition in your sport.
- Before any tryout for or contract with a professional sports team, it must be cleared by the Director of Athletics.
- You cannot agree to be represented by or obtain representation from an agent for the purposes of marketing your athletics skills.
- Do not accept any gifts of cash, loans, use of a car, or anything of value from anyone employed by VCU, an alumnus or supporter of VCU's athletic program.
- Do not accept free equipment or any discount because you are an athlete from sporting goods companies or sports equipment manufacturing firms.
- You may not receive any non-athletic institutional aid or outside aid unless it is approved by the office of financial aid.
- Do not participate on any outside team during the academic year. See compliance for exceptions during vacation periods.
- Do not participate in any basketball summer league or on any outside team during the summer that has not been approved by the NCAA and the compliance office. Please submit all outside competition requests through the Outside Competition form found on ARMS.
- Do not contact another four-year institution regarding transfer without being entered into the NCAA Transfer Portal. Please submit a Notification of Transfer in ARMS in order to be entered into the Transfer Portal and prior to communicating with another four-year institution.
- Do not accept travel or per diem expenses from an outside organization sponsoring a competition if such reimbursement is dependent on how you perform.

Time Allowed for Eligibility

NCAA Bylaw 12.8.1: Student-athletes may compete in a **maximum of four (4) years of eligibility within five (5) consecutive calendar years.**

NCAA Bylaw 12.8.1.1: The five (5) years begin when you enroll as a full-time student at **any** institution.

NCAA Bylaw 12.8.1.2: Exceptions may be granted by the NCAA Eligibility Committee for any of the following reasons:

1. Time spent in the armed services;
2. On official religious mission;
3. Recognized foreign aid services of the U.S. government;
4. Academic study abroad exception;
5. Pregnancy exception.

Season(s) of Competition



NCAA Bylaw 12.8: Student-athletes may compete in a **maximum of four seasons** of intercollegiate competition in any one sport within a five-year period. A student-athlete utilizes a season of competition when the individual:

- (a) Represents the institution in any contest against outside competition, regardless of how the competition is classified (e.g., scrimmage, exhibition or joint practice session with another institution's team) or whether the student is enrolled in a minimum full-time program of studies;
- (b) Competes in the uniform of the institution or, during the academic year, utilizes any apparel (excluding apparel no longer utilized by the institution) or equipment received from the institution that includes institutional identification; or
- (c) Competes and receives expenses (e.g., transportation, meals, room, or entry fees) from the institution for the competition.

The five-year period for seasons of competition purposes has started when a student-athlete initially registers in a regular term of an academic year for a minimum full-time program of studies for any two-year or four-year institution, and attends the student's first day of classes for that term. Time spent in the armed services, on official religious missions, with recognized foreign aid services of the U.S. government, academic study abroad and pregnancy is excepted from the five-year rule.

Countable Athletically Related Activities (CARA)

In-Season CARA Regulations

- Student-athletes are not permitted to exceed four hours per day and 20 hours per week of CARA.
- Student-athletes shall have one day off per week while in-season and during the academic year in which no CARA will occur.
- Daily and weekly hour limitations do not apply to CARA occurring during VCU's term-time official vacation period, as listed in VCU's official calendar, and during the academic year between terms when classes are not in session. If such vacation periods occur during any part of a week in which classes are in session, the institution is subject to the daily and weekly hour limitations during the portion of the week when classes are in session and must provide the student-athletes with a day off, which may be a vacation day.

Out-of-Season CARA Regulations

- Student-athletes are not permitted to exceed two hours per day and eight hours per week of CARA (of which no more than four hours per week is permitted to be spent on sports-related instruction).
- Student-athletes shall have two days off per week while out-of-season and during the academic year.
- Sports that are Out-of-Season must end all CARA one week before the start of final examinations.
- Sports that are out-of-season are not permitted to engage in CARA during institutional vacation periods/holidays and/or the summer (with the exception of Men's and Women's Basketball which are permitted to engage in specific summer athletic activities –see below).

Basketball Summer Athletic Activities

- In basketball, a student-athlete who is enrolled in summer school may engage in required weight-training, conditioning and skill-related instruction for up to eight weeks (not required to be consecutive weeks).
- A student-athlete who is enrolled in at least three degree-applicable (pursuant to Bylaw 14.4.3.1.7) credit hours in one summer term that is fewer than eight weeks in duration may engage in required weight-training, conditioning and skill-related instruction for up to eight weeks (not required to be consecutive weeks).
- Participation in such activities shall be limited to a maximum of eight hours per week with not more than four hours per week spent on skill-related instruction.
- Please ask your academic advisor if you satisfy the exception to summer school enrollment (17.1.7.2.1.5.1.1.).

Day(s) off whether in-season or out-of-season do not need to remain constant from week to week. A week is defined as any seven consecutive days.

The following table includes (but is not exhaustive of) what is considered and what is not considered CARA:

Countable Athletically Related Activities	NOT Countable Athletically Related Activities
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Practice	Training-table or competition-related meals
Competition	Physical rehabilitation
Required weight-training and conditioning	Dressing, showering or taping
Participation in a physical-fitness class mandated by a coach	Athletics department academic study hall or tutoring sessions
Required film or videotape reviews of athletics practices or contests	Meeting with coaches on non-athletic matters
Required individual workouts	Travel to and from practice and competition
Required participation in camps, clinics or workshops	Visiting the competition site in sports other than cross country and golf
Meetings initiated by coaches or other institutional staff member on athletically related matters	Medical examinations or treatments
On-court or on-field activities called by any member or members of a team and confined primarily to members of that team that are considered as requisite for participation in that sport	Fund-raising activities
Visiting the competition site in the sports of cross-country and golf	Recruiting activities (e.g., serving as a host)
	Public relations activities related to the student-athlete's sport
	Participation in regular physical education classes, with or without credit, that are listed in the institution's catalog and open to all students
	Voluntary individual workouts not required or supervised by coaching staff members. A coach may design a voluntary general individual workout program for a student-athlete
	Individual consultation with a coaching staff member initiated voluntarily by a student-athlete, provided the coach and the student-athlete do not engage in athletically related activities
	The provision of videotapes to a student-athlete by a coach that include a personalized message and athletically related information (e.g., discussion of plays, general workout programs, lectures on strategy related to sport), provided the viewing of the videotape is voluntary
	Student-athlete performing required field or facility preparation or maintenance

Academic Eligibility

All student-athletes at VCU:

- Must be enrolled as **full-time and degree-seeking students in good standing**. *Student managers* must be full-time, degree-seeking students. A student on academic or disciplinary suspension is not in good standing.
- Must **complete a minimum of 6 semester hours** of academic credit in each full-time regular academic term to be certified eligible for the next semester. Additionally, students going into their third semester must have passed 24 hours toward their degree combining the previous fall, spring and summer. Students



going into their fifth, seventh or ninth semester must have passed 18 hours toward their degree combining fall and spring semesters only.

- Must earn 18 credit hours during each regular academic year (fall and spring semesters) after the initial year of enrollment, while continuing to meet the percentage of degree requirements outlined below.
- Must **declare a major at the beginning of their third year of college**. If a major is declared prior to the third year, students-athletes must meet satisfactory progress for that major at that time.

Percentage of degree/GPA requirements (requirements for the upcoming year):

Second Year % degree:	none	(24 credits minimum)	GPA: 90%	(1.8 out of 2.0)
Third Year % degree:	40%	(120 credit program = 48 credits)	GPA: 95%	(1.9 out of 2.0)
Fourth Year % degree:	60%	(120 credit program = 72 credits)	GPA: 100%	(2.0 out of 2.0)
Fifth Year % degree:	80%	(120 credit program = 96 credits)	GPA: 100%	(2.0 out of 2.0)

Please note that the NCAA rules are minimum standards and that VCU encourages student-athletes to excel beyond this minimum.

Scholarship Reduction and Cancellation During the Period of the Award

VCU may reduce or cancel athletic financial aid during the period of the award if the student-athlete does any of the following:

- Renders himself or herself ineligible for intercollegiate competition;
- Fraudulently misrepresents any information on an application, letter of intent of financial aid agreement (this includes not reporting for practice or after making only token appearances as determined by VCU);
- Engages in misconduct warranting suspension or dismissal under the Disciplinary Process described above;
- Voluntarily withdraws from a sport at any time for personal reasons;
- Provides written notification of transfer (see Bylaw 13.1.1.3) to VCU; however, the student-athlete's financial aid may not be reduced or canceled until the end of the regular academic term in which written notification of transfer is received. If a student-athlete provides written notification of transfer to VCU between regular academic terms (winter break, summer break), VCU may reduce or cancel the financial aid immediately; or
- Violates a non-athletically related condition outlined in the financial aid agreement or violates a documented institutional rule or policy (e.g., academics policies or standards, athletics department or team rules or policies).

VCU may include in its financial aid agreement non-athletically related conditions (e.g. compliance with academic policies/standards, compliance with athletics department rules or policies) by which the aid may be reduced or cancelled during the period of the award. Any reduction or cancellation of aid during the period of the award may occur only after the student-athlete has been provided an opportunity for a hearing.

Reduction or cancellation is not permitted during the period of the award:

- On the basis of a student-athlete's athletic ability, performance or contribution to a team's success;
- Because of an injury that prevents the recipient from participating in athletics; or
- For any other athletic reason.

VCU may not include an athletically related condition (e.g. financial aid contingent upon specific performance or playing a specific position) that would permit VCU to reduce or cancel the student-athlete's financial aid during the period of the award if the conditions are not satisfied.

Athletics Aid Renewal and Nonrenewal Process

The renewal of University financial aid based on any degree on athletic ability must be made on or before July 1 of each year. Each student-athlete who received aid the previous year and who has eligibility remaining in the sport in which financial aid was awarded the previous academic year must be notified in writing whether his/her aid will be renewed (please see section Cancellation/Reduction of Athletics Aid Appeal Process).

Notification of financial aid renewals and non-renewals must come from the VCU's regular financial aid authority and not from VCU's athletic department. If there is a reduction or cancellation of athletics aid, the



University must inform the student-athlete in writing that he/she may request a hearing. If VCU notifies a student-athlete that he or she will not be provided institutional financial aid for the next academic year and later reconsiders this decision, it is permissible for VCU to subsequently award financial aid to that student-athlete.

Cancellation/Reduction of Athletics Aid Appeal Process

The procedures for an appeal of cancellation or reduction of financial aid are outlined as follows:

1. The Athletics and Veterans Certification Coordinator in the university's Office of Financial Aid receives notification from Athletics with intent to cancel, reduce, or non-renew aid for the student-athlete for the upcoming academic year.
 - a. Copy of letter addressed to student-athlete indicating recommendation to Office of Financial Aid to non-renew, reduce, or cancel aid offer for upcoming academic year signed by Executive Associate Athletic Director and carbon copied to Financial Aid and Coach is sent electronically to the Athletics and Veterans Certification Coordinator.
2. The Athletics and Veterans Certification Coordinator notifies the student of their right to appeal the non-renewal, reduction, or cancellation of aid.
 - a. The Athletics and Veterans Certification Coordinator drafts a letter to the student-athlete notifying them of the intent to reduce or cancel athletics aid.
 - i. The Athletics and Veterans Certification Coordinator mails the letters via email.
 - ii. The email address the letter is sent is the email address that Athletics has on the original notification.
 - iii. The letter informs the student of their right to appeal the change in athletics aid and details that the request must be made in writing within ten (10) calendar days.
 - b. All appeals must be in writing and sent to the Athletics and Veterans Certification Coordinator.
 - c. If student-athlete does not respond within ten (10) calendar days, the Athletics and Veterans Certification Coordinator will submit the notification from Athletics, letter from Financial Aid, and proof of certified mailing to the Financial Aid Imaging area and the documents will be imaged as part of the student athlete's permanent financial aid record.
3. Appeal Process
 - a. When the student athlete informs the Athletics and Veterans Certification Coordinator of their intent to appeal the non-renewal, reduction or cancellation of aid, as a representative of the Financial Aid Office, the Athletics and Veterans Certification Coordinator will:
 - i. Send an email notification to the Athletics Department letting them know of the student athlete's intent to appeal.
 - ii. Notify the Financial Aid-Student-Athlete Appeals Committee of the student athlete's intent to appeal.
 - iii. Determine a date for the Financial Aid – Student-Athlete Appeals Committee hearing.
 - iv. Send notification to the student athlete, Athletics, and the Financial Aid- Student Athlete Appeals Committee giving the date, time, and location of the hearing.
 - b. The Financial Aid-Student-Athlete Appeals Committee is comprised of the following:
 - i. Member of Senior Management from Financial Aid Office;
 - ii. Professional Faculty Representative from Strategic Enrollment Management;
 - iii. Professional Faculty Representative from Student Affairs;
 - iv. Faculty Athletic Representative; and
 - v. Ex Officio: Associate Director of Financial Aid for Compliance and Reporting or designee.
4. Student-Athlete Hearing
 - a. The Associate Director of Financial Aid for Compliance and Reporting or designee chairs the hearing and takes notes on the hearing process for documentation purposes.
 - b. The Chair asks everyone to introduce themselves and state what their role is at the hearing.
 - c. The Chair will ask the student to explain why they are appealing the decision.
 - d. The Chair will ask the Financial Aid- Student Athlete Appeals Committee if they have any questions for the student-athlete and, if so, ask them to pose them directly.
 - e. If the student athlete has a witness or witnesses, the Chair will ask them to explain why they are present and what information they can add to the hearing proceedings.



- f. The Chair will ask the Financial Aid-Student Athlete Appeals Committee if they have any questions for the witness(es) and, if so, ask them to pose them directly.
- g. The Chair will ask representatives from Athletics to explain their reasoning for the decision to not renew, reduce, or cancel the athletic aid award.
- h. The Chair will ask the Financial Aid-Student Athlete Appeals Committee if they have any questions for the representatives from Athletics and, if so, ask them to pose them directly.
- i. The Chair will ask the student athlete to make a final closing statement. The student athlete will be asked what they are requesting as a result of the hearing.
- j. The Financial Aid-Student Athlete Appeals Committee will go into closed deliberations to discuss the hearing and make a decision on the appeal for aid.
- k. The Chair will notify all parties of the decision of the Committee.

Summer/Winter Intersession Financial Aid

Summer financial aid may be awarded only to attend VCU's summer term, summer school or summer-orientation program.

A student-athlete who is eligible for institutional financial aid during the summer is not required to be enrolled in a minimum full-time program of studies. However, the student-athlete may not receive financial aid that exceeds the cost of attendance in that summer term. A student-athlete may receive institutional financial aid based on athletics ability and any other financial aid up to the value of his or her cost of attendance.

After initial full-time enrollment during a regular academic year, a student-athlete may receive athletically related financial aid to attend VCU's summer term or summer school if the student-athlete received athletically related aid from VCU during any previous academic year at that institution or the student-athlete has been awarded athletically related financial aid for the following academic year. Further, such aid may be awarded only in proportion to the amount of athletically related financial aid received by the student-athlete during the student-athlete's previous academic year at VCU.

There are three exceptions to the general rule. A student-athlete who was not previously on institutional athletics aid may receive athletics aid during the summer if:

- (1) A student-athlete who attended VCU on a full-time basis for only one regular term during the previous academic year may receive financial aid during the following summer term;
- (2) A student-athlete who has not received athletically related aid from VCU during a previous academic year may receive athletically related financial aid to attend VCU's summer term or summer school, provided he or she has been awarded athletically related financial aid for the following academic year; or
- (3) A nonqualifier may receive athletically related financial aid to attend VCU's summer term or summer school after the first academic year of residence under the following conditions: (a) The student-athlete has satisfied progress-toward-degree requirements and, thus, would be eligible for competition for the succeeding year (the student-athlete must have successfully satisfied the applicable requirements of Bylaw 14.4.3 and be in good academic standing at VCU); and (b) The student-athlete has been awarded athletically related financial aid for the succeeding academic year.

An institution that conducts multiple summer sessions may not award athletically related financial aid to attend any session that exceeds the proportion of the amount of athletically related financial aid received by the student-athlete during the previous year.

The procedures for the administration of summer financial aid is outlined as follows:

Summer and/or intersession athletically-related financial aid is intended to be used to provide student-athletes who need to enroll in additional classes in order to maintain NCAA eligibility for competition, to graduate on time and within the four-year plan established for each student-athlete, or to remain on campus as a result of not being able to return home for university breaks (i.e., international student-athletes who do not have the means to return home for holidays and/or university breaks).

The policies and procedures for the awarding of summer/intersession aid are as follows:

Student-athletes, head coaches, and sport supervisors will be notified when summer and intersession applications are available (in conjunction with fall and spring priority registration). Student-athletes will be required to complete/submit applications to request athletically-related financial aid for summer and/or



intersession classes. The submission of applications will ensure that:

1. All applications are received by the published deadline;
2. A complete and comprehensive academic review will be completed indicating academic “need” for additional funding;
3. The head coach will sign and endorse all applications; and
4. Sport supervisors will be required to sign all applications providing additional monitoring of fiscal responsibility.

Student-athletes will initiate the process by requesting an application from their athletic academic counselor and completing the required information before returning it to their athletic academic counselor. The athletic academic counselor will complete the academic review portion of the application, signing the application. He/she will rank the student-athlete’s application based on need and will indicate that final ranking on the application as outlined below:

Category One (1) – Student-athletes who need to enroll in summer or intersession classes to earn/maintain NCAA eligibility in order to compete. Student-athletes who are ineligible to compete are more likely to leave the university and fail to graduate than those who remain eligible.

Category Two (2) – Student-athletes who need to enroll in summer or intersession classes to maintain timely graduation. For example, a student-athlete may be awarded three hours of intersession aid in order to graduate the following spring semester and thus avoiding further need for funding the following summer session.

Category Three (3) – International student athletes who do not have the means to travel home for university holidays or breaks.

Category Four (4) – Student-athletes who do not require summer or intersession classes for eligibility or graduation purposes.

Once the applicants have been ranked and the athletic academic counselor ensures that all of the necessary information has been completed on the summer or intersession application, he /she will meet with the head coach to review academic “need” while securing the head coach’s signature and endorsement. The athletic academic counselor will then turn in all completed/signed intersession and/or summer applications to the Senior Executive Associate AD/Academic Support prior to the published deadline for continued processing.

The Senior Executive Associate AD/Academic Support will review all of the summer or intersession applications for completeness and accuracy and will create an excel spreadsheet listing all applicants by team and providing information specific to V#, academic session(s), duration of session(s) requested, and total credit hours requested while designating whether requested classes are lecture or on-line format.

The summer and/or intersession spreadsheet will then be submitted to the Director of Personnel/Scholarship Administration. That individual will add information to the spreadsheet specific to athletically-related financial aid and equivalency, residency status, associated tuition and fees costs, associated room and board costs and book costs all to be calculated into a “bottom line” breakdown by sport and as an entire athletic department. This information will be provided to all assigned sport supervisors, along with all summer or intersession applications, for his/her required approval and signature. Once reviewed and signed, all summer or intersession applications will be returned to the Senior Executive Associate AD/Academic Support.

The Senior Executive Associate AD/Academic Support will convene a meeting with an established committee of Department of Athletics administrators consisting of the following key members:

1. Deputy Director of Athletics
2. Business Office Designee
3. Senior Executive Associate AD/Academic Support/SWA
4. Director of Personnel/Scholarship Administration
5. Associate Athletics Director of Compliance

The Senior Executive Associate AD/Academic Support will provide all committee members with the informational spreadsheet, in order to review all summer or intersession applications for further processing. The committee will review all applications to determine those student-athletes who have demonstrated “need” for additional summer and/or intersession athletically-related financial aid, ensuring strict adherence to departmental budget parameters and Gender Equity/Title IX mandates. These awards will be funded from a



central administrative budget established for summer/intersession aid.

Once the committee has rendered decisions, all student-athletes who requested additional summer and/or intersession aid will receive written notification from the Director of Personnel/Scholarship Administration as to the status of their application – approved or denied. Those student-athletes who were denied additional summer and/or intersession funding will be permitted to appeal and all appeals are to be made in writing to the summer/intersession athletics aid committee. Appeals must be submitted within ten (10) calendar days of written notification that the request has been denied. All appeals must include additional mitigating circumstances indicating why the decision should be overturned. An appeal decision will be made in a timely manner. Written notification will be provided by the committee to the student-athlete.

Student Assistance Fund

The Student Assistance Fund (SAF) is intended to provide direct benefits to student-athletes or their families as determined by conference offices. As a guiding principle, the fund may be used to assist student-athletes in meeting financial needs that arise in conjunction with participation in intercollegiate athletics, enrollment in an academic curriculum or that recognize academic achievement. Accordingly, receipt of SAF monies may not be included in determining the permissible amount of financial aid that a member institution may award to a student-athlete.

All student-athletes, including international, are eligible to receive SAF benefits, regardless of whether they are grant-in-aid recipients, have demonstrated need or have either exhausted eligibility or no longer participate due to medical reasons.

Except for prospective student-athletes receiving summer financial aid prior to full-time enrollment pursuant to NCAA bylaw 16.11.1.8, no prospective student-athlete shall be eligible to receive SAF funds. The fund may not be used for the following:

1. Salaries and benefits;
2. Tuition and fees, room and board, and course-related books during a regular term (other than summer school) for student-athletes with remaining eligibility;
3. Capital improvements;
4. Stipends;
5. Competition-related travel expenses for student-athletes who are ineligible for competition (e.g., nonqualifier, transfer student-athlete);
6. Outside athletics development opportunities (e.g., participation in a sports camp or clinic, private sports-related instruction, greens fees, batting cage rental, outside foreign tour expenses) for current student-athletes with remaining eligibility; or
7. Expenses associated with a student-athlete's participation in a foreign tour.

Allocation of the Student Assistance Fund is the responsibility of the Director of Athletics or designee. It is the standard practice of VCU Athletics to allocate the largest portion of SAF funds to assist student-athletes whose athletic eligibility has expired with the cost of completing their undergraduate education at VCU. Students may apply for SAF degree completion grant assistance each spring. Applications are available in the Athletics Business Office. SAF grants are awarded on or about May 1 each year.

The procedures for the administration of Student Assistance Fund are outlined as follows:

The coach or staff member requesting access to the Student-Assistance Fund must submit a written request (e-mail is sufficient) to the Associate Athletics Director for Compliance. This request must list the purpose of the request and the approximate cost. If the request is permissible, the Associate Athletics Director for Compliance will submit the request to the Executive Associate Athletics Director and/or the Deputy Director of Athletics for budget approval. Upon final review, the Executive Associate Athletics Director and/or the Deputy Director of Athletics will notify the requester of approval or denial of the request.

Degree Completion Additional Aid

Student-athletes who have exhausted their athletics eligibility but have yet to graduate from VCU with their first undergraduate degree may request degree completion funding by completing and submitting a Degree Completion Additional Aid application. For best consideration, applications should be submitted no later than 30 days prior to the start of the academic semester for which aid is being requested.



The student-athlete can request an application from his/her athletic academic advisor. The student-athlete will be responsible for completing his/her designated section(s) while ensuring that the VCU Athletics Compliance Office completes the required eligibility review; ensuring that the university designated major advisor/college advisor provides the required academic review (confirming graduation); and ensuring that the head coach signs and endorses. The student-athlete should return the completed application to his/her sport specific athletic academic advisor by the published deadline for further processing. The athletic academic advisor will review the application for completeness and accuracy and submit it to the Senior Executive Associate AD/Academic Support by the published deadline.

The Senior Executive Associate AD/Academic Support will review all of the degree completion applications for completeness and accuracy, sign and create an excel spreadsheet listing all applicants by team and providing information specific to VID#, academic session(s) and duration of session(s) requested, total credit hours requested, while designating whether requested classes are lecture or on-line format.

The additional aid spreadsheet will then be submitted to the Director of Personnel/Scholarship Administration. That individual will add information to the spreadsheet specific to athletically-related financial aid and equivalency, residency status, associated tuition and fees costs, associated room and board costs, and book costs all to be calculated into a “bottom line” breakdown by sport and as an entire athletic department. This information will be provided to all assigned sport supervisors, along with all degree completion applications, for his/her required approval and signature. Once reviewed and signed, all degree completion applications will be returned to the Senior Executive Associate AD/Academic Support.

The Senior Executive Associate AD will convene a meeting with the designated committee, providing all members with the informational spreadsheet, in order to review all degree completion applications for further processing. The committee consists of the following members:

1. Deputy Director of Athletics
2. Business Office Designee
3. Senior Executive Associate AD/Academic Support/SWA
4. Director of Personnel/Scholarship Administration
5. Associate Athletics Director of Compliance

The committee will determine those student-athletes who have demonstrated need for degree completion athletically-related financial aid. Student-athlete degree completion is a fundamental value of VCU Athletics. Every effort will be made to facilitate the graduation of student-athletes with remaining course requirements at the conclusion of their eligibility while adhering to departmental budget parameters and Gender Equity/Title IX mandates.

Once the committee has rendered decisions, all student-athletes who requested degree completion aid will receive written notification from the Director of Personnel/Scholarship Administration office as to the status of their application, whether approved or denied. Those student-athletes who were denied additional fifth-year funding will be permitted to appeal and all appeals are to be made in writing to the degree completion additional aid committee. Appeals must be submitted within ten (10) calendar days of written notification that the request has been denied. All appeals must include additional mitigating circumstances indicating why the decision should be overturned. An appeal decision will be made in a timely manner. Written notification will be provided by the committee to the student-athlete.

Student-Athlete Host of On-Campus Prospects

A student-athlete chosen to represent the department and university in hosting a prospect will:

- Complete the Student Host Instructions form on ARMS stating they will abide by the standards and spirit of the rules set forth by the University and the NCAA surrounding a visit. The Student Host Instructions form will be part of the student-athlete’s beginning of the year forms packet in ARMS. .
- Meet with the head coach to discuss the hosting requirements.
- Avoid, at all times, the perception of impropriety during the course of the visit.
- Acknowledge that providing the opportunity to consume or actual consumption of alcohol and/or drug by the host or prospect on all official visits is strictly prohibited.

Employee-Student Consensual Relationship



As set forth in the university's policy on Employee-Student Consensual Relationships, VCU is committed to maintaining learning and work environments free from conflict of interest, exploitation and favoritism. Employees shall not engage in consensual relationships whenever the employee has a "position of authority" such as:

- Teaching or Coaching
- Supervising or advising students as a part of a sport program or employment

Any student involved in a relationship prohibited by this policy is expected to report the relationship to the Office of the Dean of Students. The Dean or Associate Dean or designee will work with the student and applicable administrators to make appropriate arrangements for the student's continued education, training, or work activities.

Anonymous reports may be submitted through the VCU Helpline www.vcu.helpline.com or 1-888-242-6022. More information in the university's policy on Employee-Student Consensual Relationships: <https://policy.vcu.edu/sites/default/files/Employee-Student%20Consensual%20Relationships.pdf>

VCU Student-Athlete Employment

Student-athletes may earn legitimate on- or off-campus employment during the academic year provided:

- All employment must be approved by the head coach and reported to the compliance office by completing a **Student-Athlete Employment form in ARMS**.
- Your compensation may not include any remuneration for value or utility that you might have for an employer because of the publicity, reputation, fame or personal following that you have obtained because of athletic ability.
- You may be compensated only for work actually performed and at a rate commensurate with the going rate in that locality for similar services.

NCAA Bylaws allow for student-athlete employment during the academic year. To avoid any improprieties, a monitoring procedure for school-year employment is imperative. Student-athletes will be reminded of this policy during the compliance meeting and will be required to affirm their understanding of employment procedures. Additionally, to secure school year employment, the student-athlete will be asked to complete employment program paperwork. Additionally, the Athletic Department may assist student-athletes in finding employment during the summer, including the summer prior to enrolling. Representatives of Athletics interests are permitted to employ or assist in finding employment for student-athletes during the summer; however, compensation must be commensurate with the going rate in that locality and for work actually performed. All employment arranged by an Athletic Department staff member or representative of Athletics interests should be reported to the compliance staff via the appropriate documentation.

To specify, a student-athlete may earn legitimate on or off-campus employment during the academic year provided:

- All employment is reported to the compliance office & a Student-Athlete Employment Form is completed through the student-athlete's ARMS account;
- The student-athlete's compensation does not include any remuneration for value or utility that the student-athlete may have for the employer because of the publicity, reputation, fame or personal following that he/she has obtained because of athletic ability;
- The student-athlete is compensated only for work actually performed; and
- The student-athlete is compensated at a rate commensurate with the going rate in that locality for similar services.

The student-athlete's employer as well as the coach must approve by signature; the student-athlete employment form before the employment may commence. The documents utilized will assist the compliance office in contacting the employer about rules education regarding employment and impermissible benefits. Information gathered from the student-athlete will include all but not limited to the following:

- Name and contact information of employer
- Supervisor information
- Salary information
- Payment and earnings information



- Anticipated weekly hours

Transfer Procedures

No member of an Athletics Department at other institutions may discuss with any student-athletes currently enrolled at VCU, any information concerning their institution's programs or about transferring without first receiving Notification of Transfer and confirming their name has been input in the NCAA Transfer Portal.

Transfer Procedure for Student-Athlete who is Leaving VCU to Attend Another Collegiate Institution

Notification of Transfer Procedures:

1. A student-athlete may initiate the notification of transfer process by providing VCU with a written notification of transfer during or after their sport's notification of transfer window.
2. The written notification of transfer must be sent to VCU's Associate Athletics Director for Compliance and Student Services.
3. VCU shall enter the student-athlete's information into the national transfer database within two business days of receipt of a written notification of transfer from the student-athlete.
4. Once the student-athlete's notification of transfer is entered into the national transfer database the student-athlete will receive a confirmation email from VCU's Assistant Athletics Director for Compliance and Student Services.
5. At that time other institutions will be able to determine whether recruiting conversations are permissible by searching the national transfer database.

Notification of Transfer - Impact on Athletics Financial Aid and/or Services and Benefits:

1. Upon receipt of notification of transfer, VCU is permitted (NCAA Bylaw 15.3.5.1.(f)) to reduce or cancel a student-athlete's athletics financial aid for subsequent terms or years based on the receipt of a notification of transfer from the student-athlete. The award may not be reduced or canceled until the end of the regular academic term that the notification of transfer is received. If a student-athlete provides written notification of transfer to the institution between regular academic terms (winter break, summer break) the institution may reduce or cancel the financial aid immediately.
2. Upon receipt of notification of transfer, VCU will have the discretion to make decisions related to roster management and access to services and benefits (e.g., academic support services, access to athletics facilities) that will or will not be provided to a student-athlete upon receipt of notification of transfer.

Uniform Transfer Rule

Per NCAA Bylaw 14.5.5.2.10, in the event of a transfer, to be eligible for competition at your next four-year institution the following must be met: (a) The student has not transferred previously from one four-year institution unless, in the previous transfer, the student-athlete received an exception per Bylaw 14.5.5.2.6 (discontinued/non-sponsored sport exception); (b) At the time of transfer to the certifying institution (see Bylaw 14.5.2), the student would have been academically eligible had he or she remained at the institution from which the student transferred, except that he or she is not required to have fulfilled the necessary percentage-of-degree requirements at the previous institution; and (c) The head coach of the certifying institution and the student shall certify that no athletics staff member or other representative of the institution's athletics interest communicated or made contact with the student-athlete, or any individual associated with the student (e.g., family member, scholastic or non-scholastic coach, advisor), directly or indirectly, without first obtaining authorization through the notification of transfer process (see Bylaw 13.1.1.3).

Please note that the student must provide written notification of transfer to VCU by the following dates:

- (1) Fall sports: a 45-day consecutive period beginning the day after championship selections are made in the sport; or May 1-15
- (2) Winter sports: a 60-day consecutive period beginning the day after championship selections are made in the sport.
- (3) Spring sports: December 1-15; or a 45-day consecutive period beginning the day after championship selections are made in the sport.



Exceptions to Notification of Transfer Windows. A student-athlete may initiate notification of transfer during a consecutive 30-day period beginning the day after either of the following:

- (a) The student-athlete's athletics aid is reduced, canceled or not renewed (except as permitted per Bylaws 15.3.4.2 or 15.3.5.1); or
- (b) The head coach of the student-athlete's team departs or announces departure from the institution.

Notification of Title IX and Sex-Based Misconduct Proceedings

In a manner consistent with federal and state law and in accordance with the NCAA's Campus Sexual Violence Policy, VCU will share relevant discipline information and incomplete Title IX or sex-based misconduct proceedings with other member institutions when a student-athlete attempts to enroll in a new college or university.

Extra Benefits

Per NCAA Bylaw 16.11.2.1, a student-athlete shall NOT receive any extra benefit. If the student -athlete receives an extra benefit not authorized by NCAA legislation, the individual is ineligible in all sports.

Definition: An extra benefit is any special arrangement by a VCU employee or a representative of the VCU athletics interests to provide a student-athlete or the student-athlete's relative or friend a benefit not expressly authorized by NCAA legislation.

If a student-athlete receives a benefit provided to them based on the student-athlete's athletics ability, it is a violation of NCAA legislation. Receipt of a benefit by student-athletes or their relatives or friends is not a violation of NCAA legislation IF it is demonstrated that the same benefit is generally available to the VCU students or their relatives or friends or to a particular segment of the student body (e.g., foreign students, minority students) determined on a basis unrelated to athletics ability. For violations of NCAA legislation in which the value of the benefit is \$200 or less, the student-athlete will have to repay the value of the benefit to a charity of their choice. The student-athlete will remain ineligible from the time the institution has knowledge of receipt of the impermissible benefit until the student-athlete repays the benefit.

VCU Protocol for Separate Travel Arrangements by Student-Athlete

It is understood that there are situations where student-athletes may travel separately from the team to sanctioned competitions. Those athletes must comply with these policies:

- Arrangements approved by the Head coach and team Administrator.
- "Release and Waiver of Liability" signed three (3) days prior to the travel. This form is located on ARMS and must be submitted and pre-approved.
- Completed release forms kept on file.

All questions can be directed to [Takeya McLaurin: 804-828-4813](mailto:Takeya.McLaurin@vcu.edu)

VCU Interim Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) Policy

General

With the NCAA providing guidance to allow student-athletes to be compensated for their name, image, and likeness ("NIL"), VCU Athletics is committed to providing elite educational opportunities in this area to its student-athletes to empower and prepare them to maximize their opportunity with respect to NIL, while also protecting their NCAA eligibility.

NCAA Rules and Virginia Law

The NCAA has adopted guidance governing student-athletes' NIL activities (the "NCAA Rules"). The NCAA Rules provide that a student-athlete is prohibited from: (1) receiving pay-for-play; and (2) receiving an improper recruiting inducement. Virginia law has been proposed governing student-athletes' NIL activities.

VCU Athletics and our student-athletes must follow the NCAA Rules, Virginia law, and this VCU Athletics policy; student-athletes, VCU Athletics staff, or other third parties should consult with the VCU Athletics Compliance Office regarding the NCAA Rules and this policy prior to engaging in NIL activities that involve VCU student-athletes.



Name, Image, and Likeness Activities

Subject to the NCAA Rules, Virginia law, and this VCU Athletics policy, VCU student-athletes may use their NIL in a variety of ways that may include, but is not limited to: promoting their own business; promoting or endorsing a corporate entity (e.g., a brand ambassador or social media influencer); conducting camps, lessons or clinics; making appearances; crowdfunding for business ventures or non-profit/charitable organizations; or signing autographs. VCU student-athletes may receive compensation, either in-kind or monetarily, for engaging in NIL activities, subject to the NCAA Rules, Virginia law, and this VCU Athletics policy. VCU student-athletes may engage in NIL activities and receive corresponding compensation from University donors or sponsors so long as the compensation is for the NIL activity and is not an improper recruiting inducement, an inducement to remain enrolled at VCU or pay-for-play compensation.

Use of Agents or Professional Services

VCU student-athletes are encouraged to obtain professional advice to assist them with NIL activities. Student-athletes may use professional service providers (e.g., marketing agent, brand manager, tax advisor, attorney) to assist with the management and procurement of NIL activities and to review NIL agreements. Such providers' engagement must be limited to NIL activities and may not be used to secure opportunities as professional athletes.

A student-athlete is required to pay the going-rate for assistance provided by a professional service provider pursuant to a standard financial arrangement (e.g., flat fee, profit share, pro bono, upfront guarantee) with the service provider. Further, a student-athlete is permitted to receive the same benefits (e.g., meals, copies, mailing) from a professional service provider that a general client could receive.

Institutional involvement in identifying, selecting, arranging or providing payment for professional service providers related to NIL activities is not permitted.

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 of VCU's Office of Trademarks and Licensing. Student-athletes may autograph and sell officially licensed memorabilia that includes University marks. 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.

A student-athlete may post or re-post content created by VCU or one of its vendors, provided VCU retains the rights to the content and the student-athlete does not use the content in any activities for which the student-athlete is compensated.

Institutional Involvement

VCU, including its faculty, staff, and other representatives, may not arrange third-party compensation for a VCU student-athlete related to the use of their NIL.

To avoid conflicts of interest, VCU faculty, staff, and other representatives cannot receive compensation from any current VCU student-athletes in exchange for any services performed related to NIL activities.

Team Activities and Academic Obligations

Student-athletes cannot engage in NIL activities during the course of team activities, which include competitions, practices, team gatherings and meetings, promotional activities and community service. 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.

Restricted Categories

Student-athletes are prohibited from engaging in NIL activities involving a commercial product or service that conflicts with existing NCAA Rules (e.g., sports wagering, banned substances) or Virginia law. Student-athletes must not use their NIL to promote casinos or gambling, including sports betting; alcohol products; tobacco and electronic smoking products and devices; cannabis, cannabinoids, cannabidiol, or other derivatives; drug paraphernalia; adult entertainment; weapons, including firearms and ammunition; substances banned by the NCAA; or products or services that are illegal.

Student-athletes are prohibited from using their name, image or likeness to earn compensation if the proposed use conflicts with an existing agreement between VCU and a third party.

Disclosure of NIL Activities

A student-athlete shall disclose all NIL activities, including information related to transactions, compensation arrangements and details of relationships with an involved individual, commercial entity and third parties (e.g., contact information, identification of role) through the VCU Athletics disclosure process. The disclosure must be submitted prior to the activity occurring. The disclosure must be reviewed by VCU Athletics within two business days of the disclosure being submitted. If arrangements and details of an NIL activity are amended, the student-athlete shall provide updates within seven days of the change. Absent disclosure, VCU is unable to assist a student-athlete with eligibility implications that may result from violation of current or future NCAA rules, state or federal law.

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 a financial counselor in the Student Financial Management Center (SFMC) to fully understand these potential impacts before engaging in any NIL activity.

Withholding, Tax & Other Obligations

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.

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.

Consequences

Violations of this policy may result in a variety of penalties depending on the nature and type of policy deviation. The most egregious deviations (i.e., proof that an NIL activity was used to compensate a student-athlete for performance or to induce a prospect to attend) may lead to termination of employment for staff members, booster dissociation, and student-athlete scholarship modification and/or roster management ramifications. Violations of NCAA legislation will be reported to the NCAA and could result in additional NCAA-mandated penalties.

Disclaimer

VCU is not liable or otherwise responsible to any student-athlete, noninstitutional entity that partners with a student-athlete, professional service provider or other entity involved with NIL activities or NIL related agreements with any student-athlete.





STUDENT-ATHLETE DRUG AND ALCOHOL PROGRAM

Introduction

The Department of Athletics at Virginia Commonwealth University, its coaching personnel, physicians, athletic trainers, and administrators, strongly believe that the prohibited use (as defined by VCU's Student Code of Conduct and the NCAA's drug testing penalties) of alcohol and drugs (excluding those drugs prescribed by a physician to treat a specific medical condition) can be detrimental to the physical and mental well-being of its student-athletes, no matter when such use should occur during the year. Additionally, use of alcohol and or drugs can seriously interfere with the performance of individuals as students and as athletes and can be extremely injurious to student-athletes and their teammates, particularly when participating in athletic competition or practice. In light of health, safety and social concerns, the Athletic Department at Virginia Commonwealth University has implemented a mandatory program of alcohol and drug education, drug testing, and counseling/rehabilitation efforts to assist and benefit its student-athletes. The student-athlete's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) will be informed of these actions if the student-athlete is a minor.

Program Statement

The program is educationally focused with three distinct phases. The first phase is a program of drug prevention and awareness. Secondly, a drug screening process has been designed to identify those individuals who need additional and more concentrated counseling. Thirdly, incentives have been designed to discourage use by those who, despite education and counseling, persist in prohibited alcohol and drug use. The purpose of Virginia Commonwealth University Intercollegiate Athletics' Alcohol and Drug Education Program is to inform and help student-athletes at the University. Specific goals of this program are:

1. To educate VCU student-athletes about the associated problems of alcohol and drug use.
2. To discourage prohibited drug or alcohol use by VCU student-athletes.
3. To identify any student-athlete who may be using alcohol or drugs in violation of university policy, to identify the drugs, and provide any substance abuse education as may be needed by the student-athlete.
4. To educate any student-athlete, so identified, on how such usage may affect the student- athlete and his or her team and teammates.
5. To provide student-athletes the opportunity to seek treatment for any chronic dependency.
6. To provide reasonable safeguards that every student-athlete is medically competent to participate in athletic competition.
7. To encourage discussion about any questions the student-athletes may have, either specifically or generally, about use of alcohol or drugs.
8. To demonstrate the commitment of the Department of Athletics to a proactive/combative effort in substance abuse.

Implementation of the VCU Alcohol and Drug Education Program

At the beginning of the academic year, each student-athlete will receive an educational drug testing information sheet, which will be followed by a form acknowledging receipt and understanding of the program, and permitting release of drug-testing information to a limited, defined group of individuals as described in the substance abuse program section.

It is hoped that no VCU student-athletes will have a problem with prohibited drug or alcohol use; however,



alcohol and drugs have touched practically all occupations and age groups, with some exceptionally respected persons found to be abusers. Drug testing, if for no other reason, should enhance the feeling of trust and camaraderie among student-athletes and their teammates in that it demonstrates a commitment to substance-free competition.

VCU Substance Abuse Testing Program

The Director for Sports Medicine is charged with implementing the substance abuse testing program. Student-athletes will be subject to random and regular testing, announced and unannounced, throughout the calendar year for substances that may include, but are not necessarily limited to the NCAA Banned Drug Classes and Alcohol. **The NCAA bans the following classes of drugs:**

- a. Stimulants
- b. Anabolic Agents
- c. Alcohol and Beta Blockers (banned for rifle only)
- d. Diuretics and Other Masking Agents
- e. Street Drugs
- f. Peptide Hormones and Analogues
- g. Anti-estrogens
- h. Beta-2 Agonists

Note: Any substance chemically related to these classes is also banned.

The student-athlete shall be held accountable for all drugs within the banned drug class regardless of whether they have been specifically identified.

If a student-athlete has any questions or concerns about the effect of a medication prescribed by a qualified treatment provider on the testing, they should contact the Director for Sports Medicine.

NCAA Nutritional/Dietary Supplements Warning:

Before consuming any nutritional/dietary supplement product, student-athletes should review the product with a member of the Sports Medicine staff. Student-athletes should also always keep in mind the following with respect to supplements:

- There is no complete list of banned substances.
- Dietary supplements are not well regulated and may cause a positive drug test result.
- Student-athletes have tested positive and lost their eligibility using dietary supplements.
- Many dietary supplements are contaminated with banned drugs not listed on the label.
- Any product containing a dietary supplement ingredient is taken at your own risk.

Examples of NCAA Banned Substances in Each Drug Class

- **Stimulants:** amphetamine (Adderall); caffeine (guarana); cocaine; ephedrine; fenfluramine (Fen); methamphetamine; methylphenidate (Ritalin); phentermine (Phen); synephrine (bitter orange); methylhexanamine, “bath salts” (mephedrone) etc. Exceptions: phenylephrine and pseudoephedrine are not banned.
- **Anabolic Agents (sometimes listed as a chemical formula, such as 3,6,17-androstenetrione):** boldenone; clenbuterol; DHEA (7-Keto); nandrolone; stanozolol; testosterone; methasterone; androstenedione; norandrostenedione; methandienone; etiocholanolone; trenbolone; etc.
- **Alcohol and Beta Blockers:** alcohol; atenolol; metoprolol; nadolol; pindolol; propranolol; timolol; etc.
- **Diuretics (water pills) and Other Masking Agents:** bumetanide; chlorothiazide; furosemide; hydrochlorothiazide; probenecid; spironolactone (canrenone); triameterene; trichlormethiazide; etc.
- **Street Drugs:** heroin; marijuana; tetrahydrocannabinol (THC); synthetic cannabinoids (eg. spice, K2, JWH-018, JWH-073)
- **Peptide Hormones and Analogues:** growth hormone (hGH); human chorionic gonadotropin (hCG); erythropoietin (EPO); etc.
- **Anti-Estrogens:** anastrozole; tamoxifen; formestane; 3,17-dioxo-etiochol-1,4,6-triene(ATD), etc.
- **Beta-2 Agonists:** bambuterol; formoterol; salbutamol; salmeterol; etc.



Any substance that is chemically related to the class, even if it is not listed as an example, is also banned!

NCAA Testing and Sanctions

Student athletes are required to consent in writing to drug testing under the terms of NCAA policy on drug testing, as a condition of the privilege of participating in intercollegiate sports. Failure to provide such consent shall result in immediate suspension and possible permanent expulsion from the team.

The NCAA will test at championship events and, in some cases, on a random basis.

The VCU Program

1. VCU protects the privacy of all student-athletes participating in this program by restricting access to information disclosed in the program to VCU personnel responsible for its administration and other university officials who require the information in order to perform their university responsibilities. Further, release of information is made only with the athlete's written consent, or as required by law.
2. The information provided to student-athletes includes a description of the purposes of the drug awareness programs and specific information about the drug-testing component. Student-athletes are informed of procedures for collecting samples and procedures upon determination that a test result is positive, including both verification of the result and due process. Student-athletes are also advised of sanctions that may be imposed for violations of the policy.
3. The University provides information about the program to all intercollegiate athletes and recruits early in the recruitment process, or during the academic year. VCU views participation in intercollegiate athletics as a privilege, therefore, a student-athlete's voluntary participation in any intercollegiate athletic activity serves as consent to drug testing as required by the program. Student-athletes must agree, by NCAA rules, to undergo drug testing prior to their participation in any NCAA championship event.

Prohibited Drugs

1. Use of controlled substances regulated by federal or state law, such as amphetamines, cocaine, cannabinoids, barbiturates, anabolic steroids, other performance enhancing drugs, and any other controlled substance by any member of any intercollegiate athletic team of Virginia Commonwealth University is expressly prohibited, whether such use occurs before or during the sport's season. The only exceptions are for licensed physician-prescribed medication for the individual student-athlete.
2. Unauthorized use of such drugs will constitute an abuse of the privilege of practicing with the team and representing the University in intercollegiate athletic competition. Such unauthorized use may result in the student being denied the opportunity to practice with the team, or to play in one or more competitions.

Drug Screening

1. Under the program, there is routine drug-testing for the use of all prohibited substances by any member of any intercollegiate athletic team at Virginia Commonwealth University.
2. Student-athletes are free to refuse to consent to drug testing under this program. However, a student-athlete who declines participation in the program, which is designed to protect the health and welfare of the student-athlete, will not be permitted to participate in intercollegiate athletics for Virginia Commonwealth University and will lose his/her athletic grant in aid.
3. All student-athletes may be required to submit urine samples at any time the individual is enrolled at VCU and is a student-athlete. These samples will be tested for the NCAA Banned Drug Classes and Alcohol.
4. The Director for Sports Medicine will notify the randomly selected student-athletes to submit urine samples at the designated date, time, and location.
5. All student-athletes are required to make themselves available for post-game or event testing, pursuant to NCAA rules.
6. All student-athletes who are otherwise eligible to compete in NCAA championship competitions



must sign the consent to drug testing prescribed by the NCAA and undergo such testing as required by the NCAA in order to participate. (This "specific consent" is required by the NCAA before any NCAA championship event).

Collection Procedures

Collection procedures are in accordance with the NCAA Bylaws and the VCU Athletic Department. Drug testing will generally be performed through analysis of urine samples; however, the VCU Athletic Department reserves the right to use other appropriate methods including, but not limited to, breathalyzer tests and hair sampling.

Student-athletes will be summoned to provide urine samples under direct supervision of the athletic training staff or other professionals designated by the Assistant Athletic Director for Sports Medicine. All student-athletes will be supervised throughout the urine collection process to ensure against dilution and/or switching of samples.

Supervision means that the Drug Test Administrator (or designee) will directly witness the specimen collection in the following manner, provided, however, that at all times reasonable additional or alternative steps necessary to maintain the integrity of the urine specimen may be implemented.

Violations of the Policy

1. A student-athlete who fails to submit to drug testing as provided in this policy, shall be considered to have made a decision not to participate in the program and will be immediately eliminated from all athletic activity. This student-athlete will also forfeit his/her athletic grant in aid.
2. The sanctions for confirmed positive test results are set forth below.

Sanctions

Upon violation, a student-athlete is required to meet with the Director of Athletics or their designee, the Sport Supervisor and the Head Coach. The student-athlete, if under the age of 18, shall notify their parents/guardians of the positive result of the drug screen in the presence of the Head Coach and Assistant Athletics Director for Sports Medicine. The student-athlete is required to participate in designated counseling and/or treatment programming designated by the Assistant Athletic Director for Sports Medicine. The student-athlete will be subjected to additional mandatory testing depending on the severity and frequency of the failure(s). This determination will be made by the Director of Athletics or designee on a case-by-case basis. Based on team and VCU Athletic Department rules, the Head Coach, in consultation with the Sport Supervisor and Director of Athletics/designee, has the discretion of adding further sanctions.

VCU's Alcohol Program

Virginia Commonwealth University does not condone the illegal or otherwise irresponsible use of alcohol. Alcohol dependence is a progressive disorder in which both psychological and physical dependency can develop. The negative physical and mental effects of the abuse of alcohol are well documented. Even low doses of alcohol impair brain function, judgment, alertness, coordination, and reflexes. Very high doses cause suppression of respiration and death. Chronic alcohol abuse can produce substance abuse disorders, dementia, sexual impotence, cirrhosis of the liver, heart disease, and sudden withdrawal can produce severe anxiety, tremors, hallucinations, and life-threatening convulsions. Therefore, it is the responsibility of every member of the University community to know the risks associated with alcohol use and abuse. This responsibility obligates students and employees to know relevant University policies and federal, state, and local laws and to conduct themselves in accordance with these laws and university policies. Violation of alcohol laws is a criminal offense, which may be punishable by suspension of driver's license, imprisonment, and/or fines. Any member of the University community who violates state alcohol laws is subject to prosecution. Whether or not criminal charges are brought, all students are subject to University discipline for any violation of law or university policy, including suspension and expulsion.

The consumption of alcohol by student-athletes is prohibited in connection with any official intercollegiate team function. An official team function, for purposes of this policy, is defined as any activity that is held at the direction of or under the supervision of the team's coaching staff (e.g. team dinner, recruiting, road trips). This applies to coaches and staff as well.

Sanctions

The student-athlete who tests positive for alcohol on a substance abuse test will be required to meet with the Substance Abuse Counselor and comply with the recommendations of the Substance Abuse Counselor and retest negative. In addition, the student-athlete's head coach will be notified. A student-athlete who consumes alcohol will be accountable for any alcohol-related incident in which he or she is involved. In such cases, the student-athlete is subject to University, Athletic Department or team disciplinary action dependent upon the



incident. If the reported alcohol-related incident is in violation of university policy but not of law, the Director of Athletics, in consultation with the head coach of that team, the Director of Sports Medicine, and Substance Abuse Counselor will determine if the circumstances warrant suspension of the student-athlete from practice and/or game competition.

If the reported alcohol related incident is unlawful, whether or not he/she is charged in the offense (violations of University regulations, violations of local, state, and/or federal laws), the Director of Athletics or their designee may suspend the student-athlete indefinitely or permanently, after consultation with the head coach of that team, the Director of Sports Medicine, the Substance Abuse Counselor and/or other officials who may have knowledge of the incident. All matters related to alcohol related offenses during the student-athlete's NCAA eligibility will be handled in a manner consistent with positive drug tests.

The Athletic Department prohibits the use of any funds to be used toward the purchase of alcoholic beverages in a setting at which student-athletes or prospective student-athletes will be in attendance. This applies to prospective student-athletes' use or purchase of alcohol for them while visiting the University and their student hosts. Regardless of whether a student-athlete or student host has reached the legal drinking age, purchasing alcohol for consumption by a person under the legal drinking age (including a teammate or a prospective student-athlete) is a violation of state law.

Student-Athlete's Right of Appeal

The student-athlete has the right to appeal sanctions imposed by the Director of Athletics if he/she is convinced the test results are incorrect, the student's refusal to participate in the program is justified, or there exist other mitigating circumstances. The student-athlete is required to file a written appeal with the Assistant Athletic Director for Compliance and Student Services within three (3) days of notification of sanction. The appeal will be reviewed and a final decision rendered within five working days by the Assistant Athletic Director for Compliance and Student Services and Faculty Athletic Representative.

Conclusion

It is believed and hoped that implementation of this Virginia Commonwealth University Alcohol and Drug Education Program will serve to benefit all connected with intercollegiate athletics at the University. Further, it is believed that participation in this program will aid student-athletes in becoming better students, better athletes, and better able to make individual, informed, and intelligent decisions with reference to drug and alcohol usage, both now and in the future.





SPORTS MEDICINE PROGRAM

The VCU Athletics Sports Medicine Program provides the prevention, care and rehabilitation of sports-related injuries/ illnesses.

***Under no circumstances will a coach or student-athlete be allowed use of the athletic training room without the direct supervision of the athletic training staff. ***

- You should report all injuries or illnesses to the athletic training staff. The athletic trainers will report all injuries or illness to the respective coaches.
- No student-athlete should be sent directly to the doctor or to the hospital *except* in the case of an emergency.
- All other injuries and illnesses require clearance and referral from the Sports Medicine staff.
- Athletic teams that are in season will receive top priority in athletic training room services.
- It is the responsibility of each student-athlete to ensure that he/she is on time for taping and treatments to be on time for practice.

Medical Hardship

NCAA Bylaw 14.2.4: Student-athletes may regain a season of competition if an institution requests a waiver on your behalf. This waiver will be processed and granted by the conference office. In order to be considered for a medical hardship, ***all*** of the following conditions must apply:

- The incapacitating ***injury or illness occurs in one of the four seasons of intercollegiate competition*** at any two-year or four-year collegiate institution or occurs subsequent to the first day of classes in the student-athlete's senior year in high school;
- The ***injury or illness occurs prior to the completion of the first half of the playing season that concludes with the NCAA championship in that sport*** and results in incapacity to compete for the remainder of that playing season; ***and***
- The injury or illness occurs when you have ***not participated in more than three contests or dates of competition (whichever is applicable to that sport) or 30 percent (whichever number is greater)*** of the institution's scheduled contests or dates of competition in your sport.

Sports Nutrition Program

The VCU Sports Nutrition Program provides education & resources for student athletes to reduce the risk of injury/illness, perform their best, create lifestyle changes, and have a healthy relationship with food.

Available Services:

- Individual meetings (30 minutes with a follow up meeting every 2 weeks as needed)
 - Meal plans/general diet recommendations





OFFICE OF STUDENT-ATHLETE SUPPORT SERVICES

- Lead grocery store tours & cooking classes

Each team is assigned an athletic advisor who will coordinate academic and personal advising. The athletic advisor will monitor and assist student-athletes in meeting requirements for academic progress and athletic eligibility consistent with VCU's policies and NCAA rules and regulations.

Advisor Meetings

- Each team is assigned a specific athletic advisor for the entire year.
- All first-year student-athletes meet with their athletic advisor weekly.
- Upper-class student-athletes meet with their athletic advisor as needed.
- Athletic advisors can help with study skills, time management, registration, major and class selection.

Study Hall

- Study Hall requirements are set by the student-athlete support services staff.
- Hours will not be accepted for student-athletes who fail to log out upon leaving the study hall lab.
- Disruptive students will be asked to leave and forfeit *all* hours for that session.
- Weekly time reports are sent to the head coach at the end of every week.
- Every session has a maximum of two (2) hours at one time

Class Attendance

- Student-athletes **are required** to attend all classes when on the VCU campus.
- For in-season student-athletes, absence letters must be provided to professors during the week of Add/Drop, outlining missed classes due to competition. The absence letter is a recommendation that the professor will work with students who miss class when representing the University.
- **ALL** missed work and tests are the responsibility of the student-athlete and should be completed prior to the date missed.
- Unexcused absences will be reported to the head coach and sport supervisor by the athletic advisor and may result in missed practice and/or competition(s).

Tutoring and Academic Coaching

- The Office of Student-Athlete Support Services has a tutoring and academic coaching program available for student-athletes.
- Student-athletes can request tutoring and/or academic coaching through their athletic advisor.
- SASS reminds students to be on time for all tutoring and/or academic coaching appointments.
- Tutoring sessions are scheduled for 1 hour time blocks, on the hour.
- Tutoring does not replace class instruction as we expect students to attend all classes and labs.
- Tutors are not responsible for teaching material you missed because of a game.
- To prepare for a tutoring session, bring course syllabi, book, and notebook.
- Try to do homework/reading or assignments before meeting with the tutor.



- Write down questions or problems and bring those to the session.
- Students must call or email their athletic advisor a day in advance (**24 hours**) to change or cancel an appointment.

Two late arrivals, no-shows or coming unprepared will result in a meeting between the student-athlete, athletic advisor, tutor coordinator, and head coach to determine disciplinary measures and potential termination of tutoring services.

VCU Academic Regulations

The academic regulations applicable to all VCU students are published annually in the [Bulletin](#). Excerpted below are some academic regulations in effect at the time that this Handbook was drafted, which may be of particular interest to student-athletes, along with some additional requirements specifically for student-athletes. If there is any conflict between this Handbook and the Bulletin, then the Bulletin applies. For complete, up-to-date information about VCU's academic regulations, please review the Bulletin.

Grading and Marking System: VCU coursework is measured both in terms of quantity (semester hours of credit) and quality (grades). Grades are assigned according to a letter system, where each letter is assigned a grade point value.

A= 4.00 B=3.00 C=2.00 D=1.00 F=0.00

Grade-Point Average: The GPA is calculated by dividing the total number of grade points earned at VCU by the total number of credits attempted at VCU. Transfer credits are not counted in the GPA.

Step 1: (Grade value * Class Credit) = Points earned

Step 2: Add up the points earned for all classes taken (W = do not count in this calculation)

Step 3: Total Grade Point Value/Total Number of credits

Academic Good Standing: A student remains in good standing when one's cumulative GPA is above a 2.0

Academic Warning: A student is placed on academic warning when the student's cumulative GPA falls below 2.0 (grade C) at the conclusion of any semester of attendance — fall, spring or summer. Notification of warning appears on the student's academic record. A degree-seeking student on academic warning may not enroll in more than 14 credits per semester of attendance except under unusual circumstances and with the permission of the dean or designee of the school or college in which the student is enrolled. A student remains on academic warning for one semester of attendance, at the end of which time the student must obtain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0. Failure to achieve this GPA results in academic probation

Academic Probation: A student is placed on academic probation when the student's cumulative GPA falls below 2.0 for two successive semesters of attendance, including summer sessions. Notification of probation appears on the student's academic record.

A degree-seeking student on academic probation may not enroll in more than 13 credits per semester of attendance. Students on academic probation are expected to improve their cumulative GPA by achieving a minimum semester GPA of 2.0 during each semester of attendance. A student who achieves a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 is removed from academic probation. Failure to achieve a 2.0 semester GPA while on probation results in academic suspension.

Academic Suspension: A student is placed on academic suspension if the student earns a semester GPA below 2.0 while on academic probation. Notification of suspension appears on the student's academic record. The student also receives a letter from the Office of Records and Registration stating the conditions of the suspension. Academic suspension indicates the student has a record of continued unsatisfactory progress. A student on a first academic suspension may not enroll at the university for two consecutive semesters, including the summer session. Course work taken at another institution while the student is under academic suspension from VCU is considered part of the criteria for readmission, but the course work is not used to increase the VCU cumulative GPA. If the student is readmitted, the course work will be evaluated according to regular procedures. A student may apply for readmission to VCU for the semester following completion of the suspension period. A student readmitted after suspension enrolls under the academic probation status and is subject to the provisions of that status. If a student readmitted after suspension fails to obtain a semester GPA of 2.0 in any semester before achieving a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0, the student is placed on a five-year suspension. The student may be considered for readmission after a minimum five-year separation from VCU. Although a student may be approved for readmission to VCU, the student is not automatically eligible to receive federal or state financial aid. See the [Financial aid](#) section of this bulletin for information



about Satisfactory Academic Progress standards and suspension of aid eligibility. Detailed [information about the SAP appeals process](#) can be found on the VCU Office of Financial Aid website.

For [Readmission guidelines](#), see the Admission to the university section of this bulletin. Note that the rules and procedures for suspensions assigned due to violations of the honors system, the student conduct policy or other reasons may be different from those described here for academic suspensions.

Repeated Courses: Because some programs do not allow students to repeat courses, any student planning to do so must first consult with his or her adviser, department chair or program head. The semester credits attempted and the grade points earned for all attempts are included in computing the cumulative GPA. No matter how often a course is repeated, it may be counted only once as credits presented toward graduation unless otherwise specified in the course description. If a student repeats a course in which a D or F was earned on the first attempt, the student can file the historical repeat course option form at any time during a semester prior to the awarding of the undergraduate degree. This form must be filed before the last week of classes in any semester so the cumulative GPA can be adjusted at the end of that semester. It is available online at Records and Registration Forms.

In the case of courses that are no longer offered at VCU, students may take the established equivalent course at VCU and the historical repeat described in the previous paragraph applies. Verification of the equivalency should be confirmed with the program offering the course prior to registering for the second course.

The grade is not excluded until the request is made. If, however, more than one D or F grade is received in the same course or its equivalent course, only one of these grades will be excluded from the computation of the cumulative GPA. Grades for all attempted courses remain on the student's permanent record. Students may not repeat courses for which they have previously received transfer credit. A repeated course may be counted only once toward credits necessary for graduation. Before repeating a course, the student should consult with the adviser, department chair or program head. Initiating the repeated course option by using the historical repeat course option form will not result in a change in previously earned academic statuses (warning, probation, suspension). Students who choose to repeat a course must do so before the awarding of their undergraduate degrees from VCU, or from any other college to which VCU course work is transferred. The student's GPA at graduation will not be affected by repeating a course at any time after graduation. Students who are eligible to file a historical repeat on a course that would change their academic standing have until the end of the add/drop period the following semester to file an ARAC petition with their school/college ARAC representative to request that the academic status be changed. Once the add/drop period for the following semester has passed the student can still submit the historical repeat and have the grade point average changed, but the academic status will not be changed.¹ For courses taken in the spring semester, the following semester is the summer session and the petition must be filed within one week (seven days) of when the first summer session starts.

Mark of Withdrawn (W)

- The mark of "W" indicates the student has officially withdrawn or was withdrawn for non-attendance by the professor.
- **Student-athletes must maintain full-time enrollment** to continue varsity sport participation, and thus will not be allowed to withdraw if this results in falling below 12 credits.

Grade Review Procedures

Students have a right to appeal course grades they consider to have been arbitrarily or capriciously assigned or assigned without regard for the criteria, requirements and procedures of the course stated in the syllabus or guidelines for assignments. Grades determined by actions under authority of the VCU Honor System may not be appealed through this procedure, nor may dismissals that have occurred as a result of correctly derived

Honor System and Standards of Academic Conduct

The academic misconduct prohibited by this [policy](#) includes the following conduct defined below: cheating, deception, exploitation, facilitation, plagiarism, sabotage, and stealing. Please refer to the policy for examples.

Cheating: Cheating is gaining or attempting to gain an unfair advantage in an academic exercise usually to avoid doing original work or to make up for lack of preparation. **Deception:** Deception is causing or attempting to cause someone to believe something that is not true. In an academic context, this includes, but is not limited to: **Falsification:** Inventing or altering without instructor permission any information, citations, data, quotations, statistics, attendance records, assignments or other academic endeavors. **Forgery:** Imitating or counterfeiting of images, documents, signatures or similar documents and representing them as true. Forgery also includes the misrepresentation of credentials, including but not limited to official academic



documents, records, identifying documents, certifications or licenses.

Grade Alteration: Attempting to or successfully changing a grade to benefit an individual or individuals. Grade alteration also includes presenting without authorization an alternate or newly completed assignment in place of an already graded assignment in order to receive a different grade. **Lying:** Making false statements, verbal or written, about academic matters, such as making false statements to justify missing class(es) or assignment(s), or knowingly providing false information in an academic integrity investigation. **Omission:** Deliberately leaving relevant facts out of a full account of the truth in response to a direct question.

Exploitation: Exploitation is coercing another person to commit an act of academic misconduct, whether for their own benefit or the benefit of another person, through threats, intimidation, blackmail, extortion, bribery, offers of favors, or some other means. **Facilitation:** Facilitation is providing assistance in committing or attempting to commit an act of academic misconduct, or providing resources that could be reasonably expected to lead to an act of academic misconduct. Facilitation can occur regardless of whether the facilitator gains an academic advantage. **Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is falsely claiming ownership or misrepresenting the origins of work submitted for publication or an assignment. In other words, plagiarism occurs when an individual takes credit for work that is not their own without giving proper acknowledgement to the creator. Plagiarism can include the uncited use of someone else's words, ideas, facts, opinions, theories, illustrations, tables, figures, text, images, source code, and/or other intellectual work, even if the material is located in the public domain and can be freely shared. **Sabotage:** Sabotage is deliberately interfering or attempting to interfere with one or more students' academic work through, but not limited to: tampering with, altering, damaging or destroying personal or institutional academic materials. Sabotage may also involve interfering with a learning experience including, but not limited to, obstructing or willfully disrupting class, laboratory, formal testing or examination times, proceedings or experiences, or other classroom or academic environments. **Stealing:** Stealing is deliberately taking or attempting to take, without permission, any form of academic property or material so as to permanently or temporarily deprive others of access or use.

Grades of "D"

Student-athletes who have received "D" grades will generally have those courses counted toward NCAA academic eligibility requirements. But if student-athletes declare a major other than Undecided and receive a grade of "D," then the course may or may not be counted toward NCAA academic eligibility, depending upon the declared major requirements. Some examples are:

- MASC 101 a "D" will not count in the Mass Communications Major
- PSYC 101 a "D" will not count in the Psychology major

"D" grade courses may need to be repeated for admission into the MCV programs AND as such may not be countable for NCAA athletics competition or VCU graduation. See the Office of Student-Athlete Support Services for more information.

Mark of Incomplete (I)

When circumstances beyond a student's control prevent the student from meeting course requirements by the end of the semester, the student may request the instructor to assign the mark of I for that semester. The awarding of a mark of I requires an agreement between instructor and student as to when and how the course will be completed. Once the agreement is reached, the instructor fills out an incomplete grade assignment form bearing the student's signature; the form is submitted instead of a final course grade. A grade cannot be changed to I after the deadline for grade submissions.

The maximum time limit for submission of all course work necessary for removal of an incomplete is the end of the last day of classes of the next semester following the semester in which the incomplete was incurred (i.e., an incomplete awarded in the fall semester must be converted by the last day of classes in the spring semester, and an incomplete awarded in the spring or summer session must be converted by the last day of classes in the fall semester). At that time, an un-removed grade of incomplete is changed automatically to a failing grade. Individual departments and schools may have more stringent time limits. An extension of the time limit is possible, but must be approved, prior to the expiration date stated above, by the instructor and the dean of the school through which the course is offered. For undergraduate and professional students, written approval indicating the new time limit must be filed with the dean of the school through which the course is offered. For graduate students, written approval indicating the new time limit must be filed with the dean of the Graduate School.

Courses assigned the I mark will not be computed into the GPA.

VCU Student-Athlete Development

VCU Student-Athlete Development is designed to focus on the total development of the student-athlete. VCU Student-Athlete Development comprises five key components: Academic Excellence, Leadership



Development, Career Development, Community Engagement and oversight of the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC).

Leadership Development: Rams Leadership Academy-The purpose of the Rams Leadership Academy is to develop and enhance the leadership potential of VCU student-athletes. Each student in the program has been nominated by their coach as one who exemplifies the potential to be an emerging leader on their teams.

Career Development: To encourage the career development of VCU student-athletes, seminars and workshops are offered on interviewing, resume writing, personal statement/portfolio creation, applying to graduate school, and networking.

Community Engagement: Student-athletes represent VCU as role models both on-campus and in the community. Throughout the school year, many teams and individual student-athletes participate in a variety of Community Engagement events including visiting local schools, mentoring children, children's hospital visits, and volunteering with groups on and off campus.

Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC): SAAC's aim is to develop, promote and enhance the VCU student-athlete experience while fostering a culture of collaboration, leadership, engagement and unity between student-athletes on campus and in the community. SAAC also acts as one voice and serves as the link between student-athletes and VCU Athletics administration.

