

Bison Bulletin



Bucknell University Athletics Compliance Department

Recruiting 101: New Rules for August 1, 2014

Beginning on August 1, 2014, the frequency and form of recruiting will be changing for many of Bucknell's sponsored varsity programs. In particular, initial contact dates, electronic correspondence restrictions, and recruiting materials are going to be simplified in many respects.

For sports other than Basketball, Cross Country/Track and Field, Football, and Swimming and Diving, coaches will be able to call prospective student-athletes (or his or her relatives or legal guardians) beginning September 1 of his or her Junior year in high school. These telephone calls are no longer limited in quantity and may be made at Bucknell's discretion. This rule replaces the current restriction of a single phone call each week to prospective student-athletes beginning July 1 after their Junior year.

Additionally, for all sports other than Cross Country/Track and Field, Football, and Swimming and Diving, any form of electronic correspondence, including instant messages and text messages, may be sent to prospective student-athletes. Until a prospective student-athlete has signed an NLI or Bucknell's written offer of admission and/or financial aid, or Bucknell has received a financial deposit in response to an admission offer, the correspondence must be sent

directly to him or her and must be private between only the sender and recipient. In other words, there may not be any communication in chat rooms, message boards, or posts to "walls." Until August 1, 2014 only email and fax are approved methods of electronic communication.

Additionally, there will be no content restrictions on attachments to electronic correspondence, except any video or audio attachments may not be produced for recruiting purposes nor be personalized for a particular prospective student-athlete and must also conform to requirements laid out in Bylaw 13.4.1.7.

For basketball there are some additional restrictions. Color attachments may be included with electronic correspondence but only items specifically permitted as printed recruiting materials may include any sort of information pertaining to recruiting. All other attachments, including a media guide, and video and audio materials may not include any information created for recruiting purposes. Further, any attachments, other than a media guide and permissible video and audio materials, may not include any animation, audio, or video clips and there shall be no cost associated with sending the attached item.



Cross Country/Track and Field, Football, and Swimming and Diving are still prohibited from sending any form of electronic correspondence other than email and fax messages. However, after a prospective student-athlete signs an NLI or written offer of admission and/or financial aid, or Bucknell receives a financial deposit in response to an offer of admission, the limit on forms of electronic communication from these sports is lifted.

Finally, for all sports, there will no longer be restrictions on the design or content of general correspondence and attachments. The size restriction will remain intact thereby continuing to limit printed materials to 8.5 by 11 inches when fully opened and the envelope used to mail to 9 by 12 inches.

Contact vs. Evaluation



A contact is any face-to-face encounter between a prospective student-athlete (or his or her parents, relatives, or legal guardians) and an institutional staff member or athletics representative during which any dialogue occurs in excess of an exchange of a greeting. Even just positioning oneself in a location where contact is possible is considered a contact, regardless of whether any conversation occurs. It is not a contact if the prospective student-athlete (or his or her parents, relatives, or legal guardians) approaches the staff member or athletics representative on his or her own accord without any prior arrangement and the dialogue includes nothing more than a greeting and the encounter is immediately terminated.

An evaluation is any off-campus activity designed to assess the academic qualifications or athletics ability of a prospective student-athlete. This includes visiting a prospective student-athlete's educational institution (provided no contact occurs) or observing him or her participating in any practice or competition at any site.

Please keep in mind there are many exceptions and limits for various sports to these two general definitions and you should always check with Compliance if you have any questions.

NCAA Members Weigh Transfer Autonomy vs. Free Agency

KEY BISCAYNE, Fla. — Though the American Athletic Conference will have no formal influence over certain areas of NCAA policy once a new autonomous structure for the five so-called power conferences is approved later this year, commissioner Mike Aresco has said repeatedly his league will adopt whatever new rules or athlete benefits are put on the table.

"We're aligned with them," Aresco said this week as the American's coaches and athletics directors gathered for their annual spring meeting. "We want to be like them. We think we're very close to them in terms of the issues. The issues they face are the issues we face."

Like several other commissioners outside the Power 5, however, Aresco has questions about whether some of the areas initially included under the autonomy banner instead belong to all 32 conferences in Division I.

And one of those issues in particular — transfer rules — could very well be a fulcrum for how much power the SEC, ACC, Big Ten, Big 12 and Pac-12 are allowed to grab.

Last week, when Pac-12 presidents outlined their plan for reform in a letter to the other 53 presidents of power conference schools, one of the 10 bullet points was to "liberalize the current rules limiting the ability of student-athletes to transfer between institutions."

What that liberalization encompasses, however, was left vague — perhaps intentionally. Even the power conference schools themselves aren't sure how far to take it.

But the proverbial line in the sand could be drawn if the Power 5 want to loosen the rules so much that athletes wouldn't have to sit out a year if they transfer.

Schools in the American or Mountain West see the possibility of de facto free agency as a major threat, where an Alabama or Texas could theoretically try to fill a hole on their roster by simply poaching a player who excelled in a less prestigious conference.

"If somebody comes after (former Fresno State quarterback) Derek Carr after his sophomore year and says, 'You want to come over here? You're pretty good,' that's an issue," Mountain West Commissioner Craig Thompson said earlier this month at his league's meetings in Phoenix.

Though there's no data to suggest that eliminating all transfer rules would disproportionately hurt schools outside the Power 5 — it's possible they'd benefit just as much from

athletes at top schools transferring "down" — there is overwhelming concern that such a system would lead to a recruiting process that never ends.

"We want kids to get to school and start working on their education," Temple football coach Matt Rhule said. "We don't want them to keep getting recruited. Recruiting is long enough."

Though the NCAA has taken a few stabs at reforming transfer rules — at one point even floating the idea to allow athletes a one-time transfer without penalty if they achieved a certain grade-point average — no significant changes have stuck. Last month, the Division I Board of Directors eliminated waivers that allowed athletes to transfer and play immediately if they had a family circumstance or other hardship that required them to change schools.

On the other hand, external pressures might necessitate some changes. For instance, the College Athletes Players Association, which is seeking to represent Northwestern football players as a labor union, has targeted transfer rules as one area of desired reform.

There also have been several incidents in recent years where schools imposed severe and seemingly unfair restrictions on where athletes can transfer, inviting bad publicity. Earlier this week, Kansas State granted women's basketball player Leticia Romero a release to transfer to any school outside the Big 12, but only after initially denying her request, a decision that drew significant attention and criticism.

In the current climate, the NCAA might be wise to get away from those scenarios where schools have almost unlimited power to limit where players can go when they decide to transfer.

Cincinnati football coach Tommy Tuberville, however, said there are far bigger problems that need to be addressed before significantly altering transfer rules.

"When players start talking about being compensated more, I think you have presidents, ADs and faculty reps say, 'Wait a minute, let's start giving on some of these other issues where it doesn't pertain to money,'" Tuberville said. "I'm all for giving kids money if that's what we're going to do. I think they deserve it because they don't have a chance to get a part-time job. But let's make sure we do what's best for the student-athletes and quit messing around with things that aren't broken."

Lifting all restrictions on transfers might have

By: Dan Wolken, USA TODAY Sports

far-reaching implications, particularly on the Academic Progress Rating. If a player transfers and hasn't achieved a 2.6 grade-point average, the school loses APR points, which could ultimately lead to penalties including a loss of scholarships or a postseason ban.

"I'm not sure many people understand that other than men's basketball coaches," Tulane's Ed Conroy said.

The relatively recent spike in college basketball transfers — more than 400 players have changed schools each of the last two years — is one reason why the power conferences want to get their arms around the issue to some extent.

"Autonomy is not about competition and competitiveness. It's about student-athlete welfare," SEC Commissioner Mike Slive said. "To the extent that the transfer rule relates to student-athlete welfare, we feel it ought to be in the area of autonomy."

Aresco, however, said he sees it as an issue of shared governance among all 32 D-I conferences. He also questioned how transfer regulations that only applied to those five conferences would work when players in a variety of sports would likely continue to transfer between the two levels.

"It has to do with competitive balance and competitive integrity and other issues that aren't financial in nature," Aresco said.

That philosophical divide may come into play over the next few months as the steering committee for autonomy considers alterations to their initial proposal. But regardless of whether the transfer issue lands under autonomy, it's one that coaches in all leagues will continue to wrestle with and wonder what implications may come from sweeping changes.

"I know there's some anxiety about not allowing student-athletes to say, 'You know, I made a decision when I had just turned 17. I made the wrong choice, and I should be at a different school,'" Stanford football coach David Shaw said. "There should be some leniency there. I don't know what that's exactly going to look like, because I understand both sides of it."

Contributing: George Schroeder, Nicole Auerbach

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Recent Violation: Impermissible Use of Grant-in-Aid, Improper Recruiting, and Failure to Exercise Institutional Control

In May 2014, the NCAA sanctioned a member institution for violating the Bylaws when the university allowed student-athletes to purchase unapproved items and issued other student-athletes impermissible refunds or credits from unused portions of their athletics grant-in-aid awards. The institution was also sanctioned for failing to withhold ineligible student-athletes from competition after learning of these violations. Additionally, the head coach of one program recruited impermissibly over the course of several years. Because of the numerous violations, it was found that the university failed to demonstrate control of and responsibility for its athletics department.

The first violations occurred when 110 student-athletes participating in 15 sports purchased over \$17,000 of impermissible items, including electronic devices, school supplies, and personal hygiene and apparel items, instead of required textbooks. The misappropriation of funds continued when 215 student-athletes participating in 15 sports received over \$119,000 of unused athletics aid in the form of cash payments, Visa cash cards, checks, and deposits into both personal and student accounts. The university also failed to act after learning of these violations by certain student-athletes and allowed them to compete while ineligible instead of requiring them to undergo the NCAA reinstatement process.

In regards to recruiting, one head coach violated the NCAA bylaws when he deliberately developed a relationship with an individual who could help him recruit prospects from a certain foreign country. In addition to the head coach recruiting in the foreign country during a quiet period, the

head coach also directed the individual to talk to prospective student-athletes and permitted him to provide over \$11,000 in inducements and extra benefits, including transportation, lodging, and meals, to five prospective student-athletes who later enrolled at the institution. Further, the same head coach failed to comply with a directive from the university's department of athletics, which resulted in the institution impermissibly awarding financial aid to an ineligible student-athlete.

The NCAA found that the university failed to exercise institutional control and monitor the administration of the student-athlete textbook distribution and the student financial account system. The institution further failed to appropriately monitor the four of the varsity programs to assure compliance with NCAA financial aid, recruiting, and extra benefits legislation.

The institution was sanctioned heavily by the NCAA, including being subject to a four-year probationary period, a fine of \$140,000, reductions in grant-in-aid equivalencies for 7 different programs, recruiting restrictions, vacation of wins, disassociation of an athletics representative, and a three-year show cause order for the head coach, among other penalties. During their probationary period, the university must continue to develop and implement a comprehensive rules education program on the NCAA legislation, inform prospective student-athletes in all sports of the violations committed and that the institution is on probation, and publicize specific and understandable information concerning the nature of the infractions. They must also file a preliminary compliance report and annual compliance reports indicating the progress made.

Compliance Conundrum

Corner Blitz is a junior football prospect that is interested in enrolling at Ocean State University (OSU) for the fall 2015 term. Corner has not yet had an opportunity to visit campus and has only had limited conversations with the coaching staff. Corner is going to attend one of OSU's football camps this summer and would really like to spend some time during the camp speaking with the coaching staff and getting a tour of the whole campus. Is this permissible?

No. NCAA Official Interpretation- 12/5/13-Contact Restrictions Prior to Camps or Clinics (I)- states that for purposes of contact restrictions on the day or days of a prospective student-athlete's competition, a noninstitutional, private camp or clinic is considered an athletics competition or athletics event and an institutional camp or clinic is not considered an athletics competition or event. Therefore, in sports other than basketball, a coaching staff member may make recruiting contacts during a permissible contact period with a prospective student-athlete participating in a noninstitutional, private camp or clinic only after the completion of activities on the final day of the camp or clinic. **Conversely, official or unofficial visits may occur on an institution's campus on the day of an institutional camp or clinic before the camp or clinic begins.**

[References: NCAA Division I Bylaws 13.1.6.2 (practice or competition site) and 13.1.6.2.1 (additional restrictions- basketball); official interpretation (4/19/13, Item No. 1); and staff interpretation (03/25/13, Item No. a), which have been archived]

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Bucknell University, by virtue of its membership with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), is responsible for ensuring complete compliance of all constituencies with all NCAA Rules and Regulations.

This newsletter serves as a way for the Compliance Department to educate and inform our coaches, sports administrators, and student-athletes about relevant rules and tips, hot topics in college athletics, and upcoming dates to remember.

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June/July Recruiting Calendars

June Recruiting Calendar:

MBB, WBB—Quiet Period, June 1-30

XC/T&F—Dead Period, June 11-June 14

FB—Quiet Period, June 1-July 31

SB—Dead Period, June 1-4 (noon)

July Recruiting Calendar:

MBB— Dead Period, July 6-31, except July 9 (5 p.m.) - July 13 (5 p.m.), July 16 (5 p.m.) - July 20 (5 p.m.), and July 23 (5 p.m.) - July 27 (5 p.m.) are Evaluation Periods

WBB—Dead Period, July 13-22 and July 30-31; Quiet Period, July 1-5; Evaluation Period July 6-12 and July 23-29 (Please see the Compliance Department for details on a possible Evaluation Period exception.)

FB—Quiet Period, June 1-July 31



MBA, FHY, MGO, WGO, MLAX, WLAX, ROW, MSOC, WSOC, MSWD, WSWD, MTE, WTE, VB, MWP, WWP, and WR have only contact periods during June and July

Reminder: All coaches must successfully pass the NCAA Division I Coaches Certification test in order to recruit off-campus. Please be on the look out for more information from the Compliance Department regarding testing dates and times. A coach that successfully passed the 2013-2014 test is certified through the end of July 2014.