Collegiate Athletics Policy

The primary concern of an educational institution is its educational effectiveness. That effectiveness can be measured by evaluating the contribution of each institutional program in achieving the educational objectives of the institution as a whole.

Sports and athletics of all kinds—intercollegiate, intramural, and recreational—are deeply rooted in educational institutions and in American society. Well-conducted programs of athletics add significantly to the educational experience, and to a collegiate atmosphere of wholesome competition. These programs deserve attention during the accrediting process as important elements of higher education.

The issue is not whether there should be athletics programs, but rather that they be conducted with integrity, and in a manner consistent with sound educational policy and the institution’s educational objectives.

OBJECTIVES

Athletic program objectives should represent the views of students, faculty, administration, and trustees. They should be prepared and approved through a process which provides for the contributions of all constituencies, and their expressions of approval or concern. The objectives are to be reviewed periodically to ensure that they represent the current position of the institution and that those who are governed by them understand them.

PROGRAMS

An educational institution must determine for itself the scope and goals of its athletic programs, and should make an appropriate commitment of budget and resources. Whatever shape the programs take, they should be fully institutionalized and integrated into the larger educational environment of the campus. Institutional policies should encourage the interests and participation of both men and women in team and individual sports, in intramural as well as varsity competition. These policies should assure access for all students to appropriate equipment and facilities.

The type and level of intercollegiate competition should be proportional to the size and resources of the institution. Intercollegiate programs should be demonstrably constructive, and never exploitative for particular interests of the institution, the alumni, or the public.

If students who participate in intercollegiate athletics are subject to different institutional policies and procedures, the institution must be able to explain and justify those policies in relation to the purposes of the institution.

Intercollegiate athletics should not inappropriately limit or detract from intramural and recreational athletics programs on a campus.
ORGANIZATION AND PERSONNEL

While organizational details will vary with local conditions, ultimate responsibility for all programs rests with the chief executive officer of the campus and the governing board. If there is an advisory committee that oversees athletic programs, it should involve representatives of appropriate constituencies, including faculty, students, and administration. Coaches and athletic directors are staff at some institutions, faculty at others, and administrators at still others; their professional qualities and attitudes are of primary significance in establishing and maintaining the level and educational validity of athletic programs.

ITEMS FOR INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW AND GUIDANCE FOR ON-SITE EVALUATORS

Philosophy and Purpose

1. There is a statement of philosophy and purpose for athletic programs that is periodically reviewed.
2. The goals and scope of the athletic program reflect institutional purposes and the actual commitments made to the athletic program.
3. The program is integrated into the larger educational environment of the institution.

Control

1. The institution’s control over collegiate athletics is demonstrably effective.
2. The roles of the chief executive officer, any faculty advisory committee, the athletic director, and the faculty athletic representative are clearly stated and understood.

Academic Standards

1. Special admissions for athletes are the same as for institutional special admissions, and are under the authority of regular academic structures.
2. Degree requirements are the same for athletes as for other students. Academic advising and counseling are under appropriate academic control. If special athletic department tarring programs are offered, they are also conducted under appropriate academic control.
3. The graduation rates of student athletes are measured and efforts are undertaken to ensure reasonable progress toward the degree.

Fiscal Accountability

1. All expenditures and income from whatever source, together with the administration of scholarships, grant-in-aid, loans and student employment, are fully controlled by the institution. They are included in its regular planning, budgeting, accounting, and auditing procedures.

Professional Staff

1. The athletic and coaching staff reflects high standards of integrity and the values of the institution.
2. The coaching staff exerts a positive influence on student athletes in terms of academic performance and character building.
3. The reporting channels are clear.
4. Position descriptions are available for all staff.
5. Professional staff meet generally accepted levels of preparation.