



A

Student-Athletes'

Guide to

College Recruitment

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Dear Student-Athlete:

Drawing on the many inquiries over the years regarding the college recruitment process, I have compiled answers in one convenient place. I hope you will find this to be a very helpful document. Please feel free to contact me at any time with your questions, suggestions, or concerns. Wooster has dozens of alumni/ae working in colleges across the country and even more who enjoyed stellar collegiate athletic careers. In addition to our in-house resources, Wooster will be happy to utilize the alumni/ae network to help you find the right college or university.

While it was longer ago than I care to realize, I can clearly remember being a Middle School student-athlete with many questions and important decisions to make regarding my future. Where should I attend high school? Will my choice of high school impact my college options? Do I want to play several sports well or do I want to concentrate on just one sport? Will I be able to play sports in college? Perhaps you've asked yourself similar questions.

I was a three-sport athlete as a Middle School student at an independent school very similar to Wooster. During 8th grade, my parents gave me the choice to remain at the independent school for high school or go to the local public school. Despite the fact that most of my good friends were attending public school, I decided to stay where I was because being a multi-sport athlete, a leader on teams, and gaining an academic advantage were important to me. I knew that if I had chosen to attend public school I would have only been able to play on one varsity sport, and the educational experience would have been disappointing in the long run.

As the fall of my senior year approached, I was in the position to narrow my college choices. I knew that I wanted to attend a college that had sound academics and also provided me with the opportunity to continue to be a multi-sport athlete. I chose a small Division III Liberal Arts school where I was able to play soccer, ice hockey, and lacrosse, as well as earn major and minor degrees in the disciplines that interested me.

As you embark in the college process, please let me know if I can be helpful to you.

Sincerely,

David J. MacNutt

David J. MacNutt
Director of Athletics

The College Recruitment Process

Guidelines for Marketing Yourself as an Athlete and Playing Sports in College

Many Wooster School student-athletes wish to pursue playing sports in college. We have numerous alumni/ae who have successfully played at competitive Division I, Division II, and Division III schools. Many factors need to be considered when a student is thinking about playing sports in college. Some of the questions athletes need to ask of themselves are: Do I want to play a sport in college? Am I passionate about this (or these) sport(s)? Am I physically and mentally capable of playing at a higher level? How much time am I willing to commit to this sport each day? Do I want to play more than one sport in college? At what level would I like to play? Wooster has plenty of resources to help student-athletes determine which the best track is for them. Students are encouraged to seek out the Athletic Director as the initial step.

Many athletes make the mistake of thinking that playing for larger high schools will improve his or her chances of gaining recognition by college Coaches. This is simply not true, unless the high school is one of the top teams in the nation in the sport of interest. The fact is that it is the work a student-athlete does outside of the high school team will get him or her recognized. I'm referring to college showcases, premier teams, national tournaments, highly rated camps, and the like. Once a student is on the radar, colleges may choose to visit to see a game.

Marketing oneself as an athlete is hard work. It takes a great deal of time and effort and this process begins freshman year. There are differences between Division I, Division II, and Division III, programs and there are differences in programs within each division. All of this varies from sport to sport, and a student needs to research on his/her own and with his/her Coach to see which program would be the best fit.

The information below is designed to help guide athletes through the college recruiting process. Athletes will learn about the timeline of when and how to best be seen by college Coaches and when to contact Coaches. In addition to this recruiting timeline, athletes can find helpful information about differences in divisions, recruiting rules, registering to the clearinghouse and much more at www.ncaa.org.

Time-Line:

Middle School Years:

- Strive for a strong academic record. This will allow you to have many more college options if you choose to pursue athletics in college.
- Play any and all sports you have an interest in, so that you can keep your options open as to which sport you would like to pursue in college.
- Attend one or more sport-specific camps to improve your skills. (Talk to your Coach and Athletic Director about the camps that would be best for you).

9th Grade:

- Strive for a strong academic record. This will allow you to have many more college options if you choose to pursue athletics in college.
- Play any and all sports you have an interest in, so that you can keep your options open as to which sport you would like to pursue in college.
- Inform your Coach and Athletic Director that you may be interested in playing sports in college.

- Attend one or more sport-specific camps to improve your skills. (Talk to your Coach and Athletic Director about the camps that would be best for you.)
- Weight train, condition, and continue to play in the off-season.
- Begin to record your athletic information on an athletic resume.

10th Grade:

- Continue to strive for a strong academic record.
- Continue to participate in any and all the sports you are interested in playing.
- Weight train, condition, and continue to play in the off-season.
- Play in outside leagues and tournaments. Participate in college showcases and other college recruitment venues to gain exposure.
- Research colleges and athletic programs. Investigate and decide at what level (Division I, II, or III) you are interested in playing. Utilize your Coaches and outside individuals when making this assessment. Go see teams at various levels compete. Be honest with yourself, and most importantly, watch the schools you are interested in playing for compete in your sport. Watch how the Coaches Coach and how the players react to their styles.
- Attend several sport-specific camps at colleges of interest (or where a college Coach may be coaching).
- Record all athletic information on your athletic resume, which includes information such as athletic camps attended, club teams, awards, height and weight, statistics, positions played, standardized test scores, GPA, AP classes taken, etc.

11th Grade:

- Send a preliminary introduction letter to college Coaches in the summer before your junior year. The letter should include introducing yourself, providing detailed information about your size, academic qualifications, interests, personal statistics, awards and honors. You should mention your desire for college competition, reasons for believing you can participate successfully, and your general reasons for wanting to go to that college.
- Send an athletic resume to college Coaches in the summer.
- Continue to strive for a strong academic record.
- Set up a meeting with parents, Coaches, Athletic Director, and college guidance counselors to discuss the college list. Compile a tentative list of prospective schools.
- Continue to participate in any and all sports you are interested in.
- Weight train, condition, and continue to play in the off-season.
- Continue writing Coaches with updated information throughout the year.
- Play in outside leagues and tournaments. E-mail college Coaches to inform them that you will be participating in a tournament, showcase, and/or camp.
- Discuss with your Coach whether you should compile a videotape, a clip from a game, or a highlights video.
- Call the college Coach to make an appointment to meet with her/him if you are going to visit and interview at the college. (Important: Coaches cannot return your call before July 1).
- July 1 following the junior year is the first date that a college Coach can initiate contact with a prospective player - contact may include a telephone call, official or unofficial visit to the campus.
- Record all athletic information on your athletic resume.
- Make unofficial visits to campuses to help narrow your choices. Let Coaches know well in advance when you plan to visit.
- Make or have a video made which includes both full game footage and highlights. Send your videos only upon request from a prospective college Coach.

- Register with the NCAA Clearinghouse.

12th Grade:

- Send an updated athletic resume in the summer before your senior year.
- Set up official and unofficial visits with college Coaches – plan to spend the night.
- Continue to be in contact with college Coaches -- inform them when you will be competing in a tournament or play-off game, send emails or newspaper clippings that document your contributions, send them your senior year schedule of competition.
- Continue to weight train, condition, and play in the off-season.
- Early in the Fall, narrow your choices of schools.

Questions to Ask During Your College Visit

Before you decide to make your first visit to a college, it's a good idea to think carefully about the kind of information you are going to need to make an informed college selection. Once you do, you'll be able to ask the right kinds of questions. The following should get you started:

Ask the Recruiter:

- What position do you want me to play and how many others are you recruiting for the same position?
- What is your coaching philosophy? What is your offensive philosophy? What is your defensive philosophy? Are you considering any changes?
- Will I be red-shirted? If I need a 5th year, will you finance it?
- What happens to my scholarship if I'm injured or ineligible?
- What types of academic support services are available for athletes?
- Has drug use been an issue at your school? Has drug use been an issue with your athletic program?
- What is expected of players in the off season?

Ask the Players at the School:

- What does your typical daily schedule look like – in terms of course load and practices? How does it change whether you're in-season or out of season?
- Approximately how many hours per night do you study?
- What, generally, are the feelings the professors have regarding athletes?
- How do you like the living spaces? How do you like the food?
- Do you have an academic advisor? If so, how is the relationship you have with him or her?
- Are the Coaches available and supportive when you have academic concerns and challenges?

Ask the Non-Athletes at the School:

- What do you think of the quality of education you are receiving?
- If you had the chance to do it all over again, would you still choose this school?
- What is the general opinion of the athletic program at this school?
- Do you like to go to athletic events at the school?

Ask of School Officials and Admissions Officers:

- What are the graduation rates for the athletes at the school? What are the graduation rates for athletes playing my sport?
- What is the average length of time that it takes someone to earn a degree in (your top choice of

- majors) while participating in my sport?
- What are the placement rates and average starting salaries for graduates in my field of study?
- What is my eligibility for additional financial aid?

Questions to Ask Yourself Following Your Visit

You will have to ask yourself several important questions after you have visited colleges in order to select the right school for you. The questions below will provide you with a good start. Take the time to think carefully about your answers and be sure to talk to the College Guidance Counselor, your Coach, your Athletic Director, and your parents about answers that might be difficult for you. Remember that you want the right athletic and academic experience.

- Did any of the recruiters have negative things to say about the other schools that you are considering?
- Did any of the recruiters promise that you'd compete right away, and even be a starter? (If so, they might have been less than honest.)
- Would you attend the school even if you had no intention of competing in athletics?
- Do the Coaches and players seem genuine and care about each other?
- Will you be academically successful at this school? Athletically successful? How do you measure up to the athletes already there?
- Were the Coaches and players you met honest, available, friendly, and genuinely interested?
- Were the Coaches interested in academics? Did they ask you about your educational and career goals? Were they knowledgeable about your intended program of study?
- Will you fit in with the rest of the student body at this school? Will you be comfortable in associating with them for four years?
- How will you feel if one or more of the Coaches leaves? Will you still be happy with the school and your athletic participation?
- Does the school satisfy all of the criteria that you established with your parents and College Guidance counselor? This is perhaps the most important question – so give it serious thought.

Sample Letter to College Coaches

Dear Coach Auriemma,

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to you. I am currently a junior at Wooster School and with the completion of this current season, I have played varsity basketball for the past three years. I am 5'8" and weigh 130 pounds and have played both shooting guard and small forward. I was selected as the Most Valuable Player on the team last season, have earned three consecutive All-League honors, and was selected as a New England All-Star for the past two years. Currently I am averaging 14 points, 6 steals, 6 assists, and 8 rebounds per game. Our team has won our league title during all three of my years on the team. I have also attended the Nike college showcase in Hartford, CT and played in the AAU national tournament in Chicago, IL.

In addition to playing basketball, I have been a starter on our league championship varsity girl's lacrosse team. My grade point average in a "5", which is roughly an A- in comparable schools. I am interested in both math and science and will most likely apply to the College of Arts and Science. My career goals are not yet determined. I have watched your team play several times and I think, with much work ahead, that I am ready to play at the UCONN level.

My Coach, Dave MacNutt, has encouraged me to write this letter. Feel free to contact him at 203-830-3991 or david.macnutt@woosterschool.org for further information. Please forward any materials that I need at this point to further express my interest in your program. I hope to hear from you.

Sincerely,

Your Name

NCAA Rules and Regulations

High School athletes are bound by the same NCAA rules and regulations that college players are. Your failure to be aware of these requirements could jeopardize your athletic future. Read the following NCAA rules carefully and share them with your parents. Be sure to talk with your College Guidance Counselor, Athletic Director, and Coach if you have any questions.

Contacts with College Coaches:

- High School athletes can be contacted by a college only after the completion of their year. A contact is defined as any face-to-face meeting involving even a simple “hello.”
- High School athletes can receive letters from college Coaches, faculty members, and students after September 1 of their junior year.
- Contacts with college boosters are prohibited at any time
- College Coaches may contact a high school athlete at home or at school, but only keeping within the NCAA rules. Refer to the NCAA guide for the “College Bound Student-Athlete” for specific information. The guide can be viewed on the NCAA’s website at <http://www2.ncaa.org>.
- During any contact, you may not receive T-shirts, college mementos, or financial inducements to sign with a particular college.

Visits to College Campuses:

- The NCAA allows “prospective student-athletes” one expenses paid visit to each of five different universities. Be sure to select your visits wisely. Remember that this restriction applies even if you are being recruited in more than one sport.
- You may not receive an official visit until you provide the college authorities with an official high school transcript and a score from your PSAT, PACT, plus SAT, or ACT taken on a national testing date.
- See the College Guidance Counselor for information regarding the NCAA Clearinghouse and the Student Release form.

Helpful Links

College Recruitment Information:

- <http://collegesource.org> - Categorized links to hundreds of other resources for college.
- <http://collegeconfidential.com> - Topics range from test prep, admissions, college life, financial aid and more.
- <http://campustours.com> - Virtual online tours of colleges throughout the country.
- <http://allaboutcollege.com> - Links to individual schools by State, as well as other useful information.
- <http://collegelink.com> - College searches, test prep, financial & scholarship information.
- <http://www.Xap.com> - a powerful college search engine that allows users to provide specific criteria for school searches.
- <http://www.collegeboard.com> - Topics include, test prep, college search, admissions advice, financial information.
- <http://www.campuschamps.com> - Information for high school athletes.
- http://www.nytimes.com/ref/sports/2005_RECRUIT_SERIES.html - A New York Times series dedicated to College Athletic Recruiting.
- <http://www.naaclearinghouse.net> is your comprehensive guide to playing sports in college. The site includes information such as:
 - An online version of NCAA Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete.
 - Links to the NCAA website.
 - Core-course listings for high schools.
 - Online information about Division I and Division II initial-eligibility requirements.
 - Online Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

Rules per Sport:

- Please visit: http://www2.ncaa.org/portal/media_and_events/ncaa_publications/playing_rules/ to download the rules for the following sports (for free):
 - Boys' Soccer
 - Girls' Soccer
 - Girls' Volleyball
 - Boys' Baseball
 - Boys' Lacrosse
 - Boys' Tennis
- Please visit <http://nfhs.org> to download the rules for the following sports (for a small fee):
 - Cross Country:
 - Basketball:
 - Softball:
- Please visit <http://uslacrosse.org> to download the rules for girl's lacrosse (for a small fee).
- Please visit <http://usga.org> to download the rules for girl's lacrosse (for a small fee).