

NCAA rules questions and interpretations

March 2008

Question: May an athletic staff member give a speech (motivational, devotional) to a high school team prior to a high school contest?

Answer: No. It is not permissible for a collegiate coach or institutional athletic representative to have contact with a prospect prior to a contest. Another issue is that there is potential for contact with prospects under senior status off-campus.

Question: A D3 institution is competing against a D2 institution on Nov. 15 (prior to first D3 permissible contest date). The D3 institution is calling it an exhibition contest. The D2 institution is calling this a contest. Is this permissible?

Answer: The situation described is permissible. There was some discussion regarding this specific topic and whether or not both schools had to characterize the game similarly. The thought was that if both teams had to characterize the game as an exhibition contest or a contest it would ultimately discourage these type of interdivisional games. Thus, it was decided to allow those situations.

Question: Is it permissible for a college coach to be a guest lecturer at a high school coaching class? The class is made up of seniors AND juniors. The coach would be presenting how they got involved in coaching and what their job is like on a daily basis.

Answer: It would be permissible for a coach to be a guest lecturer. The coach however should be cautioned that any individual contact, outside the context of the teaching engagement, is subject to recruiting legislation.

Question: We have a men's basketball player who is in his 10th semester of eligibility this fall. He will graduate in December. When will his eligibility cease?

Answer: The last day of eligibility would be the date of the last scheduled exam listed in the institution's official calendar, due to no remaining semesters with their 10 semester clock. If the institution files a 10-semester extension waiver the student-athlete may practice but not compete for 30 days beyond the final exam date.

Question: Institutions have different calendars for their semesters/quarters. If a SA decides to transfer from Institution A to Institution B, how would inst. B go about certifying their eligibility in the winter when terms are not identical? In this situation, inst. A's grades will not be posted until the middle of January. Inst. B begins classes the first week of January. Would inst. B have to hold out the SA until grades were posted and transferred in to their institution?

Answer: The student can practice with the team at B as soon as the final exam period is done at school A. However, he cannot compete at B until he has his grades from the previous term at A. If he were to do otherwise, they would risk forfeiture and other outcomes that are not worth the gamble. So, he should practice only until he has enough grades from A to determine that he would have remained in good academic standing.

Question: A SA was at inst. A (D3, MIAC) last year and participated in basketball. This fall he transferred to Iowa State Univ. for his studies, with no intention of participating in athletics at ISU. The Big 12 has a rule stating that any transfer must serve a year of residence. The SA transferred back to the MIAC institution in January and would like to join the basketball team immediately. Due to the Big 12 rule, if the SA would have remained at ISU, he would not have been eligible this semester, thus the transfer tracer states that. Is there any relief for this situation?

Answer: DIII does not have a 'return to original institution without participation' exception. The only avenue for relief would be an ARS waiver of the Division III transfer rule (which would be an uphill climb).

Question: An institution has been approached to place an advertisement in a program for 9 through 13 year old participating in youth athletics in their community. Is this permissible? [I believe it would be permissible since the kids have not reached prospect status]

Answer: Yes, the institution could advertise in the youth program.

Question: An institution is hosting a high school basketball game. The institution would like to provide teams with pizzas following the contest. Is this permissible? [I believe it would be permissible if you classify all players as prospects and it is the institutions policy to provide a meal on their campus to all prospects]

Answer: It would be permissible to provide the pizzas, however the institution needs to be cognizant of several issues, including:
a. All prospects will be considered to be on either an official or unofficial visit and all relevant legislation will have to be followed including those regarding meals (Bylaws 13.6.5.6; 13.6.5.6.3; and 13.7.2.1.1) b. The contact restrictions set forth in Bylaw 13.1.4.2 will also have to be followed (note language “even if the prospective student-athlete is on an official or unofficial visit”).
c. Thus, the pizzas should not be provided nor contact made until the prospective student athletes are released by the appropriate institutional authority 13.1.4.2(c).

Question: Lets say a SA participated in soccer her first year. Her second year she no longer participates in any athletics. Is she a student-athlete any longer? Is it once you are a student-athlete, you are always a student-athlete at that institution?

Answer: Generally speaking she would still be considered a student-athlete.

Question: There is a basketball player who quit her collegiate team at Christmas. Do I need to get permission to contact her still?

Answer: You may not contact a student who is enrolled at another four year institutions unless they issue a self-release (13.1.1.2.3) OR your institution contacts the other institutions athletic department for permission to contact and it is granted (13.1.1.2).

Question: Can we publicly announce that a recruit is coming to our institution? Do they have to have deposited?

Answer: You may publicly announce once the prospect has paid acceptance of the institution’s written offer of admission per Division III Bylaw 13.10.7 (announcement of admission).

Question: Our baseball coach runs a Sunday camp as a fundraiser for his program. The camp is in Feb and March, so it is in season. Players are paid to work with the campers, they use the money for their Spring Break Trip. I'm looking at 17.02.1.1 under athletically related activities, and that is where our question lies. Is the camp considered an athletically related activity, and must he count these Sundays as one of his 6 practice days each week?

Answer: This situation really hinges on a couple of factors- First, is it voluntary? If it is mandatory I would agree that it would be considered an athletically related activity. Second, is the coach using this as an opportunity to coach his players or is it truly a camp? Based on the information provided it does not seem that the second issue is a concern. However the first issue causes some real concern. If it is mandatory or a condition of the players going on the spring trip I would agree that it is an athletically related activity and it can't count as the day off.

Question: Can we use a tennis player to help as a TA in a tennis class?? Can we pay them work study?

Answer: The situation, including work study, would be ok as long as this practice is done consistently across your campus. For example, if a math major was allowed to be a TA for a lower level math course. If this is allowable on your campus, then your situation you asked about would be permissible.

Question: A student-athlete asked for photos from competition for a scrap book. Does that constitute an extra benefit if the institution provides these free of charge?

Answer: Yes, it would be considered an extra benefit and thus impermissible. You would need to charge the student-athlete the 'going rate' for photos.

Question: May an athlete compete on the basketball team and then at the end of their season, join the Indoor Track & Field for the rest of their Indoor season?

Answer: Yes, a student-athlete may even compete on two teams at the same time at your institution (ie: basketball/swimming). The thing to keep in mind during this is that they would need to have the same day off in one week to honor the day off rule.

Question: Would it be permissible for a high school gymnastics team to volunteer to work at the regional gymnastics meet we host this March. We would use them to march in the teams?

Answer: This situation is one where the institution has to be careful as to who is essentially doing the hiring (I know they are volunteers but the same analysis applies). The answer to the question is that this situation is governed by the employment of prospects legislation, Bylaw 13.2.4. So it essentially comes down to who is choosing these individuals and how they are chosen. If athletics is responsible for the hiring/choosing of the volunteers then it would not be permissible. If some other department is responsible and the employment is arranged through normal institutional procedures then it would be permissible. In summary, this situation can be permissible but there are a few procedural hoops that must be jumped through.

Question: An incoming, enrolled golf recruit would like to take advantage of the college purchasing program offered to collegiate golf programs by club manufacturers. At what point can she purchase clubs? Can we purchase them for her, and receive reimbursement? If we wanted to supply clubs for players, when could they be fitted, ordered, and used? Can the player purchase them directly from the manufacturer, if the manufacturer agreed to accept a personal credit card- currently, they only accept personal credit cards from coaches or the school.

Answer: The recruit can only take advantage of the discount once they trigger student-athlete status, which is either attending class or their first practice.

Question: In particular to Golf and wondering about other sports also, is there a certain distance amount that they can't travel for practice unless they are competing?

Answer: No trip beyond 100 miles from your institution can be made for practice only per 16.8.1.1.
