

# Texas A&M International University



## Department of Athletics Student-Athlete Handbook

Revised: August 13, 2020



## STUDENT-ATHLETE HANDBOOK

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I, \_\_\_\_\_ will be a participant in the sport of \_\_\_\_\_.

I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to read and understand the information located in the Student-Athlete Handbook and willfully accept the benefits and responsibilities included therein. I am also aware that this Student-Athlete Handbook does not include all the benefits and responsibilities I may or will be required to undertake. I knowingly accept that violations of the procedures contained herein and those defined by the Texas A&M International (TAMIU) Department of Athletics staff, coaches, faculty or staff may result in but not be limited to suspension from participation in TAMIU athletics and/or dismissal from my respective team.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

TAMIU email address \_\_\_\_\_

Personal email address \_\_\_\_\_

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Dear Student-Athlete,

The Texas A&M International University Department of Athletics welcomes you to the university and to its intercollegiate athletics program. Your scholastic achievements and athletic abilities have provided you an opportunity to study and participate at one of the finest universities in the country. We hope you take full advantage of all the opportunities offered at TAMIU. It is our goal that you achieve academic fulfillment, athletic success and personal growth as a result of time spent here.

We have put together standards and supplemented them with other items of interest so that each of you can have a better understanding of the intercollegiate athletics program in which you participate. There is no intent for these standards and procedures to be different from those written in the Texas A&M International Student Handbook. If there should be a conflict, university policies shall prevail. Failure to comply with these standards and procedures may result in the student-athlete's loss of eligibility or grant-in-aid. The Student-Athlete Handbook shall serve as a reference during this academic year. Any questions regarding this handbook or the interpretation of the established standards and regulations should be addressed to the individual coaches or the Director of Athletics.

We embrace the NCAA Division II philosophy concerning the balance between academics and athletics. The entire TAMIU intercollegiate athletics staff is dedicated to providing the resources necessary for you to excel in both roles. We are very proud to have you with us. Take advantage of your time here. If you do, you will leave with much more than a degree; you will have a base of preparation upon which to build a great future.

Sincerely,



Griz Zimmermann  
Director of Athletics



### **Mission Statement**

The Texas A&M International University (TAMIU) intercollegiate athletics program exists to benefit the students at TAMIU, dedicates itself to student growth and development, operates under the principles of fair play and amateurism, and provides equal opportunity for talented students to participate in a nationally competitive sports program that is both values-based and educationally sound.

- GOAL # 1            *Each student-athlete who completes his/her eligibility is expected to graduate.*
- GOAL # 2            *Every sport should aspire to be competitive at the national level.*
- GOAL # 3            *An efficient and cost-effective support system for the operation of the existing athletic program should be developed and maintained.*

### **General Statement of Athletics Policy**

TAMIU's athletics policy is consistent with and complements the mission, objectives and educational goals of the university as stated in the current catalog. The basic aims of the intercollegiate athletics program are as follows:

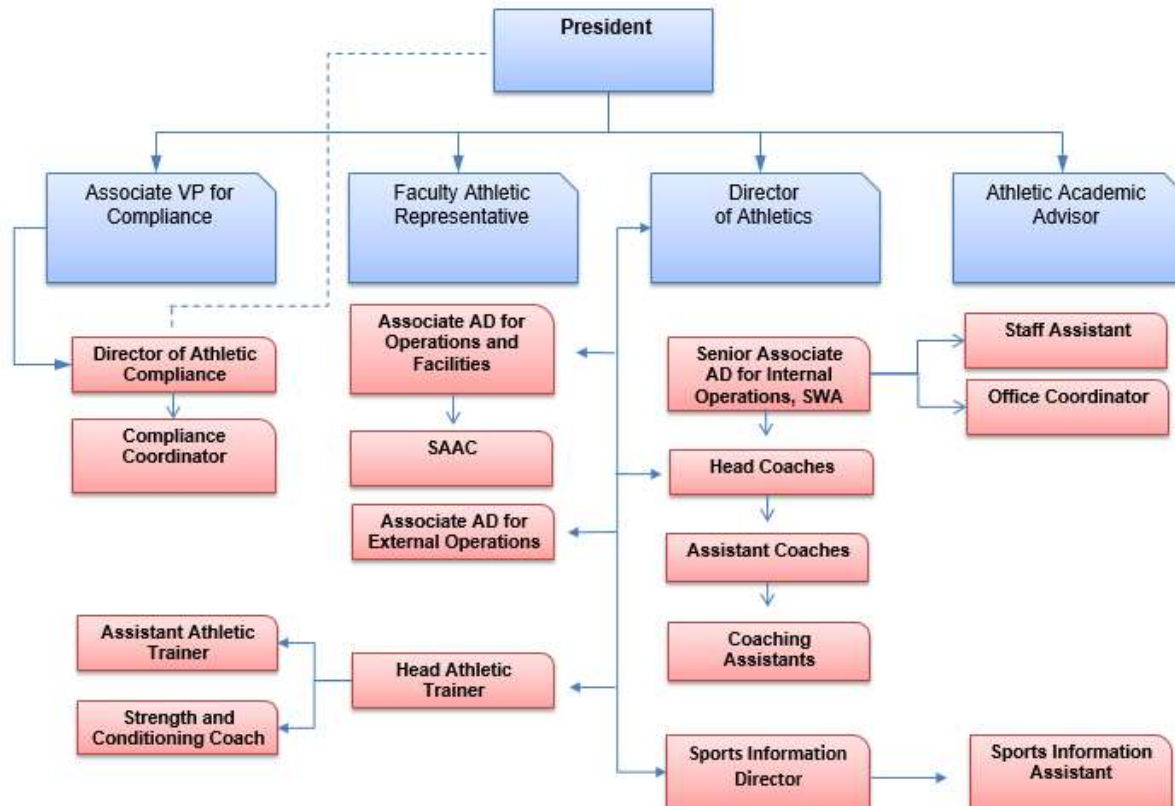
- To provide a well-rounded schedule of intercollegiate athletic competition for men and women in sports designed to encourage participation by a segment of the student body.
- To develop, encourage and foster physical fitness, physical skills, emotional control, good sportsmanship, self-discipline, school spirit, and loyalty for both participants and spectators.
- To present opportunities to participate at a high level of competition.
- To provide an opportunity for the student body to witness and enjoy intense intercollegiate athletic competition.
- To offer the student body a rallying point and instill student esprit de corps.
- To provide a vehicle by which Texas A&M International University may be projected to various communities and the media.

## Staff Directory

Title	Name	Phone Number	Office Location	E-mail
TX A&M International University		956-326-2001		
Director of Athletics	Griz Zimmermann	956-326-2890	KCB 107	<a href="mailto:griz@tamiu.edu">griz@tamiu.edu</a>
Senior Associate AD for Internal Operations, SWA	Rocio Garcia	956-326-2891	KCB 107 B	<a href="mailto:rocio.garcia@tamiu.edu">rocio.garcia@tamiu.edu</a>
Associate AD for Facilities and Operations, SAAC Sponsor	Dan Lathey	956-326-2892	KCB 107	<a href="mailto:dlathey@tamiu.edu">dlathey@tamiu.edu</a>
Associate AD for External Operations	Kelly Higgins	956-326-2998	KCB 107 E	<a href="mailto:kelly.higgins@tamiu.edu">kelly.higgins@tamiu.edu</a>
Office Coordinator	Petra Vela	956-326-3000	KCB 107	<a href="mailto:pvela@tamiu.edu">pvela@tamiu.edu</a>
Sports Information Director	Jake Hudspeth	956-326-3174	KCB 107B	<a href="mailto:jake.hudspeth@tamiu.edu">jake.hudspeth@tamiu.edu</a>
Assistant Sports Information Director	Sean Saputo	956-326-3007	KCB 107B	<a href="mailto:sean.saputo@tamiu.edu">sean.saputo@tamiu.edu</a>
Faculty Athletic Representative	Dr. Randel Brown	956-326-2679	KL 435 B	<a href="mailto:brown@tamiu.edu">brown@tamiu.edu</a>
Faculty Athletic Representative	Dr. Robin Knowles	956-326-2530	WHT 206A	<a href="mailto:robin.knowles@tamiu.edu">robin.knowles@tamiu.edu</a>
Strength and Conditioning Coach	Rodrigo Avila	956-326-2908	Weightroom	<a href="mailto:rodrigo.avila@tamiu.edu">rodrigo.avila@tamiu.edu</a>
Head Men's Basketball Coach	Mac McConnell	956-326-2898	KCB 107 C	<a href="mailto:rodney.mcconnell@tamiu.edu">rodney.mcconnell@tamiu.edu</a>
Head Women's Basketball Coach	Nathan Vogel	956-326-2904	KCB 107 F	<a href="mailto:nathan.vogel@tamiu.edu">nathan.vogel@tamiu.edu</a>
Head Women's & Men's Cross Country Coach	Benny Rodriguez	956-326-3000	KCB 107	<a href="mailto:brodriguez@tamiu.edu">brodriguez@tamiu.edu</a>
Head Women's & Men's Golf Coach	Rudy Gonzalez	956-326-3173	KWRD 218	<a href="mailto:rodolfo.gonzalez1@tamiu.edu">rodolfo.gonzalez1@tamiu.edu</a>
Head Baseball Coach	Ryan Flynn	956-326-3004	KCB 114	<a href="mailto:ryan.flynn@tamiu.edu">ryan.flynn@tamiu.edu</a>
Head Men's Soccer Coach/Director of Soccer Operations	Claudio E. Arias	956-326-2893	KCB 114	<a href="mailto:carias@tamiu.edu">carias@tamiu.edu</a>
Head Women's Soccer Coach	Jon Hussak	956-326-2901	KCB 114	<a href="mailto:jonathan.hussak@tamiu.edu">jonathan.hussak@tamiu.edu</a>
Head Softball Coach	Scott Libby	956-326-3001	KWRC 219	<a href="mailto:scott.libby@tamiu.edu">scott.libby@tamiu.edu</a>
Head Volleyball Coach	Brittany Harry	956-326-2894	KCB 107 J	<a href="mailto:brittany.harry@tamiu.edu">brittany.harry@tamiu.edu</a>

Head Athletic Trainer	Kayla Zambanini	956-326-2905	KCB 114	<a href="mailto:kayla.zambanini@tamiu.edu">kayla.zambanini@tamiu.edu</a>
Athletics Academic Coordinator	Diana Blackwell	956-326-2992	USC 222 D	<a href="mailto:diana.blackwell@tamiu.edu">diana.blackwell@tamiu.edu</a>
Director of Athletic Compliance	Henry Miller	956-326-2732	KCB 107 D	<a href="mailto:henry.miller@tamiu.edu">henry.miller@tamiu.edu</a>
Compliance Coordinator	Antonio Gonzalez	956-326-2731	KCB 107J	<a href="mailto:antonio.gonzalez@tamiu.edu">antonio.gonzalez@tamiu.edu</a>
Director of Equal Opportunity and Diversity	Lorissa M. Cortez	956-326-2857	KL 159 B	<a href="mailto:lorissam.cortez@tamiu.edu">lorissam.cortez@tamiu.edu</a>
Director, Student Conduct and Community Engagement	Mayra Hernandez	956-326-2288	STC 226D	<a href="mailto:mghernandez@tamiu.edu">mghernandez@tamiu.edu</a>
Coordinator of Compliance – Registrar’s Office	Monica Castellanos	956-326-2252	ZSC-121E	<a href="mailto:monica.castellanos@tamiu.edu">monica.castellanos@tamiu.edu</a>
Coordinator of Compliance – Financial Aid	Veronica Garcia	956-326-2164	ZSC-214K	<a href="mailto:roni@tamiu.edu">roni@tamiu.edu</a>

## Texas A&M International University Department of Athletics Organizational Chart



## **COVID-19**

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Texas A&M International University Department of Athletics will be implementing guidelines. We greatly value our Student-Athletes, Department of Athletics staff and everyone associated with Dustdevil Nation, and want to do everything in our power to provide them with a safe, yet effective environment. In doing so, we plan to make informed, fact-based decisions on workouts, practices and all other Department of Athletics activities while remaining flexible and adjusting as situations merit. We will act responsibly and to the best of our abilities, while ensuring the health and safety of our Student-Athletes and Department of Athletics staff.

Refer to Department of Athletics COVID -19 Guideline Booklet for more detailed information.

## **ATHLETICS GOVERNING ORGANIZATIONS**

### **NCAA**

In the conduct of intercollegiate athletics, the University Administration subscribes to the athletic policies of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). If you have any questions regarding NCAA or its rules, please ask the Director of Athletics or Director of Compliance.

### **Lone Star Conference**

TAMIU is a member of the Lone Star Conference (LSC), which includes:

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Distance</b>
Angelo State	San Angelo, Texas	333 miles
Arkansas Fort Smith	Fort Smith, Arkansas	707 miles
Cameron	Lawton, Oklahoma	544 miles
Dallas Baptist University	Dallas, Texas	445 miles
Eastern New Mexico	Portales, New Mexico	607 miles
Lubbock Christian	Lubbock, Texas	517 miles
Midwestern State	Wichita Falls, Texas	491 miles
Oklahoma Christian	Edmond, Oklahoma	632 miles
St. Edwards	Austin, Texas	231 miles



St. Mary's	San Antonio, Texas	160 miles
Texas A&M-Commerce	Commerce, Texas	494 miles
Texas A&M International	Laredo, Texas	
Texas A&M-Kingsville	Kingsville, Texas	125 miles
Texas Woman's	Denton, Texas	457 miles
UT Permian Basin	Odessa, Texas	439 miles
West Texas A&M	Canyon, Texas	631 miles
Western New Mexico	Silver City, New Mexico	760 miles
UT Tyler	Tyler, Texas	466 miles

## **GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES**

### **Code of Ethics**

The purpose of intercollegiate athletics is to provide an opportunity for each student-athlete to develop his or her potential as a skilled performer in a highly competitive yet educational setting. Similar to educational goals, the intercollegiate athletics program seeks to provide ways in which student-athletes may know themselves and grow emotionally, socially, and intellectually. In addition, the student-athlete has the opportunity to receive the finest coaching, to travel, to represent their school, and to learn the art of being a team member. All this gain is not without sacrifice; student athletes may lose some individual rights and privileges as they accept the policies of the program to become members of a team. Furthermore, it is our belief that being a student-athlete and representing the institution in a public manner is a privilege and requires responsibility above and beyond the normal institutional standards.

TAMIU student-athletes are expected to:

- Dress appropriately at all times since you represent your sport and the university.
- Conduct yourself in a first-class manner. Consideration of others should be one of your primary concerns.
- Attend all classes and be on time! Budget your time and work on your assignments throughout the semester, not at the last minute. Your first priority at TAMIU is your classes; your second is your sport.

You are responsible for all class work that you miss when your team travels out of town.

- Willfully abide by the spirit of the rules as well as the letter of the rules of the NCAA and the LSC throughout all games and practices.
- Refrain from using tobacco products, alcohol and illegal drugs. Use of such substances will negatively affect your athletic performance.
- Unless prescribed by a physician for medical reasons and supervised by the head athletic trainer, partaking of drugs to enhance performance or modify mood or behavior at any time is strictly forbidden.
- Respect and accept the decisions of the coach.
- Take time to read and understand the mission of TAMIU and its philosophy, goals, standards of conduct, and disciplinary procedures as they are outlined in the Student Handbook and the TAMIU Catalog. The Student Handbook has a far more comprehensive list of rules and regulations.
- Be grateful to those who make possible the opportunities afforded by participation in athletics.
- Adhere to a consistent sleep schedule, develop strong study habits, eat well, and maintain good personal grooming practices.
- Work with the Office of Financial Aid to utilize every resource available to help with educational expenses. Be aware of deadlines for financial aid forms.
- Lend a "helping hand" in campus-sponsored events.
- Keep personal disagreements away from practices and contests.
- Respect differing points of view.
- Contribute to the effort of making each practice a success. Exert maximum effort in all games and practices.
- Give primary responsibility and loyalty to the team and not to yourself.

- Control your emotions during athletic competition. Do not argue with officials, teammates, or members of the opposing team. Do not use profanity; it reflects badly on you, your upbringing, your sport and the university.
- Treat all athletic equipment and facilities with respect. Our facilities are very good and getting better. Be proud of them and help keep them in top shape.
- Maintain a positive attitude that is essential for success on and off the field. Strive for the highest degree of excellence, learn daily, and give your best at all times. Work hard to improve your physical and psychological condition.

Additionally, student-athletes are expected to abide by the following principles:

### **Principle of Rules Compliance**

#### NCAA Bylaw 2.8.1 Responsibility of Institution

Each institution shall comply with all applicable rules and regulations of the Association in the conduct of its intercollegiate athletics programs. It shall monitor its programs to assure compliance and to identify and report to the Association instances in which compliance has not been achieved. In any such instance, the institution shall cooperate fully with the Association and shall take appropriate corrective actions. Members of an institution's staff, student-athletes, and other individuals and groups representing the institution's athletics interests shall comply with the applicable Association rules, and the member institution shall be responsible for such compliance.

### **Principle of Amateurism**

#### NCAA Bylaw 2.9

Student-athletes shall be amateurs in an intercollegiate sport, and their participation should be motivated primarily by education and by the physical, mental and social benefits to be derived. Student participation in intercollegiate athletics is an avocation, and student-athletes should be protected from exploitation by professional and commercial enterprise.

## **Principle of Sportsmanship and Ethical Conduct**

### **NCAA Bylaw 2.4**

For intercollegiate athletics to promote the character development of participants, to enhance the integrity of higher education and to promote civility in society, student-athletes, coaches, and all others associated with these athletics programs and events should adhere to such fundamental values as respect, fairness, civility, honesty and responsibility. These values should be manifest not only in athletics participation but also in the broad spectrum of activities affecting the athletics program. It is the responsibility of each institution to: *(Revised: 1/9/96)*

- Establish policies for sportsmanship and ethical conduct in intercollegiate athletics consistent with the educational mission and goals of the institution; and *(Adopted: 1/9/96)*
- Educate, on a continuing basis, all constituencies about the policies in Constitution 2.4-(a).

### **Coach's Jurisdiction/Team Rules**

The coach is responsible for the total conduct of their sport program. All policies established by the coach are in the best interest of the student-athlete and shall be enforced without prejudice. All training rules and rules of curfew or conduct established by the coach shall be given to each team member prior to the beginning of the season or at the time they are established.

### **Intramural Participation**

Intramural participation is not allowed unless specific approval is given by the coach. If participation is allowed, members of intercollegiate athletics teams are not permitted to participate in intramural competition in the same sport. For example, an intercollegiate tennis player may not enter intramural tennis competition.

### **Gate Pass List**

Staff and team members, as designated by the current season roster, will be allowed 4 entries per home contest. Student-athletes wishing to place friends or family members on a pass list for home contests must submit the names to the coach the day before the contest. List of names must be submitted via ARMS. The Lone Star Conference does not honor pass lists at

away contests. Friends and family members should be prepared to pay upon arrival at away contests.

### **Travel**

Schedules for all sports are competitive and designed to provide you with the finest athletic experiences possible. Your coach assumes he/she is preparing you for championship play and wants to be sure you have many opportunities to test yourself against the best we are able to schedule prior to post-season play. For away competition, all student-athletes are required to leave from campus and return to campus with the team. Special travel arrangements may be made in consultation with your coach under extenuating circumstances such as (1) inability to leave at the scheduled departure time because of a required class meeting or examination, (2) parents coming to an away event and wishing to have you accompany them for a weekend at home. In these cases, arrangements must be made in advance and the appropriate form submitted for approval. Whenever you travel with a team, you must always remember that you are representing the university and that your actions and behavior reflect upon TAMIU.

### **Uniforms and Equipment**

You are provided with the best equipment and uniforms we can afford for your sport. Each student-athlete is expected to care for issued equipment and uniforms and return them before leaving for summer vacation. Replacement for lost or unduly damaged articles is the student-athlete's responsibility. If dismissed from the team, the student-athlete is expected to return equipment and uniforms issued to them immediately.

### **Player Information Release Policies**

A signed confidentiality statement must be on file that allows the student-athlete to authorize or deny permission to publicize information about them. A personal data form for each student-athlete must also be on file in the Department of Athletics and Athletic Compliance Office.

Additionally, the NCAA has required consent forms for drug testing and the Buckley Amendment. No student-athlete is allowed to participate in any athletic-related activity until these forms have been completed and are on file with the Athletic Compliance Office.

## **Media Relations Policies**

TAMIU Athletics has the benefit of extensive media coverage. We must use this to our advantage, not to our detriment. When speaking with media members, student-athletes should always present themselves in a dignified manner. Student-athletes should respond truthfully to questions without making negative comments that will have an adverse effect on the team or TAMIU. NEVER blame a loss on officiating or make a negative comment about an opponent. Most opportunities for media interviews will be coordinated through the Sports Information Office. During any interaction with the print or electronic media, the student-athlete represents TAMIU and projects an image of the athletic program. The following guidelines will assist student-athletes when dealing with the press:

- Always be well groomed and appropriately dressed.
- Always be courteous and positive.
- Always refer any difficult or controversial questions to the head coach or the Sports Information Director.
- Always take time to thank the media person for their time and attention.
- Plan ahead for “branding” points and be ready to be quoted.

## **Pregnant and Parenting Students**

Under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, harassment based on sex, including harassment because of pregnancy or related conditions, is prohibited. A pregnant/parenting student must be granted an absence for as long as the student’s physician deems the absence medically necessary. It is a violation of Title IX to ask for documentation relative to the pregnant/parenting student’s status beyond what would be required for other medical conditions. If a student would like to file a complaint for discrimination due to his or her pregnant/parenting status, please contact the TAMIU Title IX Coordinator (Lorissa M. Cortez, 5201 University Boulevard, KLM 159B, Laredo, TX 78041, [TitleIX@tamiu.edu](mailto:TitleIX@tamiu.edu), 956.326.2857) and/or the Office of Civil Rights (Dallas Office, U.S. Department of Education, 1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620, Dallas, TX 75201-6810, 214.661.9600). You can also report it on TAMIU’s anonymous electronic reporting site: [www.tamiu.edu/reportit](http://www.tamiu.edu/reportit).

TAMIU advises a pregnant/parenting student to notify their professor once the student is aware that accommodations for such will be necessary. It is recommended that the student and professor develop a reasonable plan for the student's completion of missed coursework or assignments. The Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity (Lorissa M. Cortez, [lorissam.cortez@tamiu.edu](mailto:lorissam.cortez@tamiu.edu)) can assist the student and professor in working out the reasonable accommodations. For other questions or concerns regarding Title IX compliance related to pregnant/parenting students at the University, contact the Title IX Coordinator. In the event that a student will need a leave of absence for a substantial period of time, TAMIU University urges the student to consider a Leave of Absence (LOA) as outlined in the TAMIU *Student Handbook*. As part of our efforts to assist and encourage all students towards graduation, TAMIU provides LOA's for students, including pregnant/parenting students, in accordance with the Attendance Rule and the Student LOA Rule. Both rules can be found in the TAMIU Student Handbook (<http://www.tamiu.edu/scce/studenthandbook.shtml>).

### **Anti-Discrimination/Title IX**

TAMIU does not discriminate or permit harassment against any individual on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity in admissions, educational programs, or employment. If you would like to file a complaint relative to Title IX or any civil rights violation, please contact the TAMIU Director of Equal Opportunity and Diversity/Title IX Coordinator, Lorissa M. Cortez, 5201 University Boulevard, Killam Library 159B, Laredo, TX 78041, [TitleIX@tamiu.edu](mailto:TitleIX@tamiu.edu), 956.326.2857, via the anonymous electronic reporting website, Report It, at [www.tamiu.edu/reportit](http://www.tamiu.edu/reportit), and/or the Office of Civil Rights (Dallas Office), U.S. Department of Education, 1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620, Dallas, TX 75201-6810, 214.661.9600.

### **Grievances**

**Your first step with concerns, suggestions, complaints or compliments should always be with your coach.** This allows the coaching staff to work any situation to the greatest benefit for the team and you. The coaching staff at TAMIU is genuinely interested with your well-being and concerns.

After taking the first step, if your concern has not been resolved, then you should schedule an appointment with the Director of Athletics and/or Senior Woman Administrator (SWA).

Any academic or financial aid grievances must follow the policies and procedures found in the University Student Handbook.

### **SUBSTANCE ABUSE PHILOSOPHY**

The TAMIU Department of Athletics acknowledges the pressures placed on student-athletes to excel both on the court and in the classroom. Our student-athletes are highly visible representatives of TAMIU. As a result, their conduct is important, not only to themselves, but to TAMIU as a whole.

One of the major problems encountered by student-athletes as a result of the pressures of competition, classwork, and high visibility is the abuse of alcohol and the use of non-therapeutic drugs, banned substances, and tobacco. The TAMIU Department of Athletics, coaches, administrators, and athletic trainers are committed to providing a safe, healthy environment for our student-athletes.

In light of health, safety, and social concerns, the Department of Athletics has instituted a departmental substance abuse policy. While problems with alcohol, tobacco, and drug use are not confined to student-athletes, they are of special concern due to the status of student-athletes as representatives of TAMIU. Student-athletes are subject to TAMIU drug-testing if they are on the institutional squad list maintained by TAMIU Athletic Compliance (this includes red shirts and partial qualifiers).

The use of dietary supplements is prevalent in athletics. Athletes use supplements to gain a competitive edge, to gain/lose weight, or to make up for dietary lacks. Athletes that misuse supplements endanger their health or eligibility. Many supplements contain substances that are dangerous and possibly banned by sports governing bodies. Some supplements may be beneficial for the student-athlete. The student-athlete is responsible for anything they ingest.

The use of non-therapeutic drugs will not be tolerated. The TAMIU Department of Athletics, as well as the NCAA, will conduct drug tests of student-athletes throughout the year. Prior to practicing, a student-athlete must sign a Drug Testing Consent Form. The student-athlete will be given no



more than 24 hours' notice for the drug test. TAMIU testing will be conducted by Drug Free Sport. NCAA testing will be conducted by representatives of the NCAA in cooperation with the TAMIU Drug-Testing Site Coordinator. While the TAMIU policy is similar to the NCAA policy, TAMIU's policy and testing program are separate and distinct from the NCAA Drug-Testing Program.

The list of substances banned by this policy may include but is not limited to the NCAA list of Banned substances. Information on banned substances can be found at [www.NCAA.org/drugtesting](http://www.NCAA.org/drugtesting). Information on medications and supplements can be found at [www.drugfreesport.com/rec](http://www.drugfreesport.com/rec). The password for drugfreesport for NCAA division II is: ncaa2.

### **Unannounced Random Testing**

All student-athletes who have signed the institutional drug-testing consent form and are listed on the institutional squad list or those who have exhausted eligibility but are still involved with TAMIU athletics in some capacity are subject to unannounced random testing at any time. The Director of Athletics or his/her designee will select student-athletes from the institutional squad lists by using a computerized random number program.

### **Reasonable Suspicion Screening**

A student-athlete or team may be subject to testing at any time when the Director of Athletics or his/her designee determines there is reasonable suspicion to believe the participant is using a prohibited drug. Such reasonable suspicion may be based on objective information as determined by the Director of Athletics or by an Associate/Assistant Athletic Director, head coach, assistant coach, the Sports Medicine staff, or team physician, and deemed reliable by the Director of Athletics or his/her designee. Reasonable suspicion may include observed possession or use of substances appearing to be prohibited drugs, arrest or conviction for a criminal offense related to the possession or transfer of prohibited drugs or substances, or observed abnormal appearance, conduct or behavior reasonably interpretable as being caused by the use of prohibited drugs or substances. Among the indicators that may be used in evaluating a student-athlete's abnormal appearance, conduct or performance are class attendance, significant GPA changes, athletic practice attendance, increased injury rate or illness, physical appearance changes, academic/athletic motivational

level, emotional condition, mood changes, and legal involvement. If suspected, the Director of Athletics or his/her designee will notify the student-athlete, and the student-athlete must stay with a member of the coaching staff, the athletics administration staff, or the sports medicine staff until an adequate specimen is produced. Note: the possession and/or use of illegal substances may be determined by means other than urinalysis. When an individual is found to be in possession and/or using such substances, he/she will be subject to the same procedures that would be followed in the case of a positive urinalysis.

### **Post-season/Championship screening**

Any participant or team likely to advance to post-season championship competition may be subject to additional testing. Testing may be required of all team members or individual student-athletes within the 30 days prior to post-season competition. If a student-athlete tests positive, he/she will not be allowed to compete at the post-season event and will be subject to the sanctions herein.

### **Re-Entry testing**

A student-athlete who has had his/her eligibility to participate in intercollegiate sports suspended as a result of a drug and/or alcohol violation may be required to undergo re-entry testing prior to regaining eligibility. The Director of Athletics or his/her designee shall arrange for re-entry testing after the counselor or specialist involved in the student-athlete's case indicates that re-entry into the intercollegiate sports program is appropriate.

### **Follow-up testing**

A student-athlete who has returned to participation in intercollegiate sports following a positive drug test under this policy may be subject to follow-up testing. Testing will be unannounced and will be required at a frequency to be determined by the Director of Athletics or his/her designee in consultation with the counselor or specialist involved in the student-athlete's case.

### **Pre-season screening**

Student-athletes are subject to pre-season drug testing and may be notified of such by the Director of Athletics or his/her designee at any time prior to

their first competition.

### **Sanctions**

For a positive drug test for non-street drugs, the student-athlete will be rendered ineligible to participate for 365 days from the date of the positive test and will be charged a minimum of one season of competition in all sports. A positive test for street drugs will render the student-athlete ineligible for 50% of their competitive season. The student-athlete shall remain ineligible until he/she tests negative in a test given by a TAMIU designated tester and his/her eligibility restored by the Institution in conjunction with the Director of Athletics, head coach, and Athletic Compliance staff. The penalty for missing a scheduled drug test is the same as for a positive drug test. A student-athlete who tries to provide an adulterated sample (masking agents, another person's urine, etc.) will be charged with a loss of eligibility for 2 years. As per NCAA regulations, a student who has been registered ineligible due to a positive drug test will remain ineligible even if he/she transfers to another institution.

A TAMIU student-athlete convicted of charges involving drugs or alcohol (minor in possession, DUI, etc.) will be subject to the same penalty as for a positive drug test. The use of alcohol and tobacco are discouraged on a year-round basis and will not be tolerated during the student-athlete's competitive season.

The Director of Athletics has final authority to change or alter final sanctions. Any sanctions given by NCAA or Department of Athletics will be reported to Office of Student Conduct and Community Engagement and added to student record even if student-athlete decides to leave team or is dismissed.

### **Appeal Process**

Student-athletes who test positive for a banned substance by the laboratory retained by the TAMIU may, within 72 hours following receipt of notice of the laboratory finding, contest the finding. Upon the student-athlete's request for additional testing of the sample, the Director of Athletics and/or designee will formally request the laboratory retained by TAMIU to perform testing on specimen B. Specimen B findings will be final, subject to the results of any appeal. If the specimen B results are negative, the drug test will be considered negative.

This policy is not to be construed as a contract between the university and the student-athletes at TAMIU. However, signed consent and notification forms shall be considered affirmation of the student-athlete's agreement to the terms and conditions contained in this policy.

TAMIU may amend this policy at any time.

## **INSURANCE/PHYSICAL EXAM/TRAINING/NUTRITION**

### **Insurance Coverage**

TAMIU provides secondary insurance coverage only for injuries sustained while participating in intercollegiate athletics. This means that you or your parents' insurance coverage is utilized first. TAMIU's policy can assist with providing additional coverage. If your insurer is an HMO or PPO, some special provisions may apply. Be sure to have your parents keep copies of all bills received and the Explanation of Benefits from your insurance company. You will fill out an information form prior to starting practice. Be sure that it has been completed and returned to the university before school starts. You may not practice or compete until the form is filed with us. There is a \$12,500 deductible per student-athlete. You must not have coverage for athletic injuries up to at least \$12,500. If you have any questions about insurance coverage for your participation in intercollegiate athletics, contact the head athletic trainer for more information. You will not be allowed to practice or play before providing your own insurance policy to the athletic trainer.

NOTE: Submit all medical bills from athletic injuries so they can be applied toward the deductible.

Should an injury or sickness occur, follow these steps:

1. Secure the necessary medical treatment.
2. Obtain itemized bills from the physician and/or hospital.
3. Complete a claim form.
4. Mail the completed claim form and medical bills to your insurance company.
5. Bring benefits statements, bills, etc. not covered by primary insurance to the Sports Medicine staff to be filed with a secondary company.

## **Pre-Participation Physical Exam**

All student-athletes at TAMIU must obtain an annual physical examination from a TAMIU team physician prior to participation in intercollegiate athletics. The exam form must be completed and on file in the athletics office prior to ANY physical participation.

## **Training Room**

The training room is provided as a service to all student-athletes for the prevention and care of injuries sustained while participating as a member of any TAMIU intercollegiate athletics team.

- All injuries must be reported to your coach and to the Sports Medicine staff as soon as possible after the injury is sustained.
- It is recommended that any medical treatment sought for an athletics injury be reported to the head athletics trainer.
- The training room hours vary according to the season. Hours will be posted on the training room door.
- For training room treatment, report to the training room at least one hour before practice time. Shoes should be removed before entering the training room area.
- Since the training room is coed, appropriate attire is required.
- If you have rehabilitation appointments in the training room or at an outside physical therapy facility, it is your responsibility to keep those appointments.
- Should you sustain an injury, your full cooperation and a positive attitude toward treatment and rehabilitation will help you recover for full participation and will be appreciated by the Sports Medicine staff.

## **Nutrition Advice**

Maintaining healthy eating habits away from home can be challenging. Many first-year college students see changes in their overall health during the first few months they are at TAMIU. One possible cause for this is that many students choose to eat foods that are high in fat and sugar, rather than eating protein-rich foods, vegetables and complex carbohydrates. From the onset, pay attention to your

nutritional intake. Limit or avoid eating junk food, particularly during late night hours. Eat three sensible meals and avoid unhealthy snacks between them.

If concerned with your overall health, consult with the Sports Medicine staff. Before trying a new fad diet, it should be approved by the Sports Medicine staff. Improper eating is the quickest way to become run down, susceptible to illness and injury, and unable to train or contribute to your fullest. It is a violation of NCAA & TAMIU Department of Athletics rules to use any performance enhancing supplements or weight control supplements. Exceptions to this rule must be approved in writing by the TAMIU team physician.

## **FINANCIAL AID**

### **One-Year Limit**

The NCAA rules do not permit an institution to award an athletic scholarship for a period longer than one academic year. This scholarship may be renewed (or not renewed) at the end of the year for the next academic year. There is no guaranteed four-year scholarship in NCAA athletics.

### **Renewals and Non-renewals of Athletics Aid**

If you are receiving a scholarship, the NCAA rules require that you be notified by July 1 of each year whether the athletic scholarship will be renewed. The official notification will come from the Financial Aid Office and not from the Department of Athletics. If the university decides not to renew your athletic scholarship for the upcoming year, you will be provided a hearing opportunity (upon request) from a group outside of the Department of Athletics.

### **Reduction or Cancellation during Period of Award**

During the period of your financial aid award (e.g., the term, the year), your athletic scholarship may be reduced or canceled if you:

- Become ineligible for intercollegiate competition;
- Fraudulently misrepresent any information on an application, letter of intent or financial aid agreement;
- Engage in serious misconduct warranting substantial disciplinary penalty;

- Voluntarily withdraw from your sport at any time for personal reasons.

### **PLAYING & PRACTICE SESSIONS**

During the academic year, coaches are limited in the number of hours that they can require a student-athlete to participate in mandatory athletic-related activities.

#### **Championship Playing Season**

A student-athlete's participation in countable athletic-related activities (CARA) is limited to a maximum of twenty hours per week and four hours per day. Coaches are also mandated to give every student-athlete one day per week that is free from CARA. This one day off, however, could be a travel day on which a team is traveling to or from a competition. Daily and weekly hour limitations do not apply to CARA during official university vacation periods while a sport is in its designated playing and practice season.

CARA includes but is not limited to:

- Practice
- Competition
- Required conditioning/weight training
- Skill-related instructional activities
- Required individual workouts
- Athletic-related meetings initiated by a member of the coaching staff
- Required film sessions
- Visiting the competition site (golf & cross country only)

Non-CARA includes:

- Voluntary individual workouts (not required or supervised by a coaching staff member)
- Training table or competition-related meals
- Physical rehabilitation
- Medical exams or treatments
- Dressing, showering, or taping
- Study hall or required tutoring sessions
- Meetings with coaches regarding non-athletic matters
- Travel to and from practice or competition
- Recruiting activities (serving as a student-host, etc.)
- Public relations activities (media interviews, etc.)

- Visiting the competition site (all sports except golf and cross country)

### **Non-Championship Playing Season**

In sports that have a non-championship segment, CARA hours are prohibited during two calendar days per week. Sports that have a non-championship segment – other than golf – limit a student-athlete's participation in CARA to a maximum of 4 hours per day and 15 hours per week during a 45-consecutive calendar-day period, omitting vacation and examination days officially announced or on days that the institution is closed due to inclement weather as long as no practice or competition occurs on such days.

In golf, a student-athlete's participation in CARA is limited to a maximum of four hours per day and 20 hours per week during a 60-consecutive calendar-day period, omitting vacation and examination days officially announced or on days that the institution is closed due to inclement weather as long as no practice or competition occurs on such days.

### **Weekly Hour Limitations Outside of Playing Season**

Outside the designated playing and practice season and during the academic year, a student-athlete's participation in CARA shall not exceed 8 hours per week and no more than 2 of these hours may be devoted to skill instruction and/or team activities. Coaches are mandated to give each student-athlete 2 days off per week during this portion of the academic year.

### **Voluntary hours**

Any athletic-related activity in which a student-athlete participates that occurs outside of the in-season practice period or the out-of-season practice segment can only be done voluntarily. Per NCAA regulations, for any athletic-related activity to be considered voluntary, all of the following conditions must be met:

- The student-athlete cannot be required to report information back to any coach or staff member (manager, etc.) pertaining to any workout that is done in a voluntary capacity.
- The activity must be initiated and requested solely by the student-athlete. A coach or any other staff member may not require a student-athlete to participate in a given workout or activity.
- The student-athlete's attendance and participation (or lack thereof) may not be reported back to the coaching staff or recorded for attendance purposes.



- A coaching staff member may not observe a student-athlete's voluntary workout or participation in voluntary activities.
- A strength and conditioning staff member may be present during a student-athlete's voluntary workout provided he/she is only present to monitor the facility for health and safety concerns.
- A strength and conditioning coach can provide a student-athlete with a suggested or recommended workout but cannot conduct or instruct the workout.
- The student-athlete shall not be subject to a penalty if he/she elects not to participate (or partially participate) in a given workout or activity that is considered voluntary by NCAA legislation.

### **Conditioning Activities**

Conditioning drills that may simulate game activities are permissible provided no offensive or defensive alignments are set up and no equipment related to the sport is used.

### **COMMUNITY SERVICE**

As a dimension of the Community Service/Community Engagement Initiative associated with NCAA Division II, we strive to develop positive societal attitudes through contributions to the community. Therefore, TAMIU athletes are required to engage in community service and our coaches will assist you in scheduling community engagement activities both individually and as a team.

Forms are available in the Compliance Office to assist you in obtaining approval for community service. These forms (one for individual and one for team) are to be completed before you participate in community service and should be signed by your on-site supervisor at the community service activity.

Documentation of community service efforts is a two-step process:

1. The head coach must submit a Community Service Pre-Approval Form to the Compliance Office for verification and approval.
2. Student Athletes must create a Helper Helper account (link will be provided) and check in to event on Helper Helper app with a code that will be provided at the event.

## **FACULTY ATHLETIC REPRESENTATIVES**

The two Faculty Athletic Representatives (FAR) are appointed by the president of TAMIU and can be found on the staff directory above. They represent the Department of Athletics to the faculty as the Chairmen of the Athletic Council and serve as the institutional representatives to the NCAA. They are faculty members that are highly respected by their peers. Their main concern is student-athlete welfare, and you are encouraged to contact them about any student-athlete welfare issue. Always remember to consult your coach first and make him/her aware of any concerns you have.

## **STUDENT-ATHLETE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAAC)**

The Department of Athletics operates in a manner designed to protect and enhance the physical and educational welfare of student-athletes and to expand the opportunities available for their participation in athletic or extracurricular activities. SAAC has been organized to facilitate communication and involvement between student-athletes and administrators and to better integrate student-athletes into the general student body. The committee meets every month to address specific concerns raised by student-athletes, to examine the academic services available, and to explore various means of enhancing student-athlete welfare.

To qualify for membership, a student-athlete must have a coach's recommendation, be identified as a leader on the team, and have no disciplinary issues. The student-athlete must exude high moral character, exemplify concern and compassion towards others, and exhibit motivation, dedication, and diligence in their work on and off the playing field. Each team's coach nominates the members of this SAAC. There will be 2 to 3 student-athletes representing each sport, and they will serve a one-year term and will be eligible for re-nomination in the fall.

## **ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

### **Eligibility**

As a member of the NCAA, TAMIU is bound by NCAA eligibility standards. These rules exist for the common good of all participants. Failure to meet these standards while continuing to participate in your sport will result in serious consequences for you, your team, and the institution.

You are the person most responsible for your own eligibility status. However, your coach, the Director of Athletics, the Associate Director of Compliance or Faculty Athletic Representative can and will help you understand and comply with NCAA requirements.

### **Academic Advising**

In order to represent TAMIU in competitions, a TAMIU Student-Athlete must maintain academic progress towards a baccalaureate or master's degree. To ensure that you meet degree requirements, the Athletic Academic Coordinator provides academic advising. You must visit with the Athletic Academic Coordinator prior to registration each semester to discuss a possible class schedule and to review your academic progress. The Athletic Academic Coordinator will help you understand academic policies and procedures while enhancing communication between you, your coach, faculty, and staff.

A student-athlete **MUST REGISTER AND PASS A MINIMUM OF 15 SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS** per semester.

Student-athletes are not allowed to drop a course after the initial add/drop period without the approval of the Athletics Academic Coordinator, head coach, athletic compliance, international student advisor (if applicable) and financial aid. All drops must be requested before the add/drop period to avoid academic penalty.

### **Progress Reports**

Student-athletes who are enrolled in their first year at TAMIU or who have a TAMIU GPA below a 2.7 are required to submit a progress report to the Athletics Academic Coordinator. Student-athletes will meet with each of their professors to discuss their current class grade, to review unexcused or athletic absences, and to confirm all assignments have been submitted on time. All professors should sign the progress report. If a student-athlete has a "C" or below on their progress report, they must schedule an appointment with the Athletics Academic Coordinator.

### **Study Hall**

Study hall is designed to provide support and structure for our student-athletes. Student-athletes with a cumulative GPA of 2.7 or greater are exempt from study

hall. All incoming freshmen and transfers are required to attend study hall for their first semester. After their first semester, students with a GPA of 2.39 or lower will be required 4 hours of study hall per week. Those with a GPA between 2.4 to 2.69 will be required to complete 2 hours of study hall per week. If a student-athlete becomes at-risk based on their progress report, they may be required to attend study hall and/or increase their study hall hours. Weeks run from Sunday thru Saturday. A report will be sent to the head coach every Monday with the status of study hall hours completed the week prior. The SADIO will contact those student-athletes that do not complete their study hall hours.

### **Guidelines to Good Grades**

Ultimately, you are responsible for your education. Although various resources exist to enhance your learning capabilities, your hard work and aggressive perseverance determine the grade you earn.

1. Attend class. Your professors have the right to set the attendance policy in their classes. If you do not have a legitimate reason to miss class, then attend class and be on time. Your professors know who you are because athletes are high-visibility students.
2. At the beginning of your sport's season, you must inform your professors of future absences due to away-game travel, and you must remind them of this at least one week prior to the travel date.
3. Concentrate in class and take good notes.
4. Review your notes after class and add any information you might have rushed over during class time. Put your notes in good readable form. Their value to you is for use later in organizing the material and structure of the course in preparation for tests and exams.
5. Keep up in work assigned. Work ahead if possible.
6. Note problems early, e.g., being unable to understand professors, having communication issues with them, having poor note-taking ability, not understanding course material or concepts, or lacking preparation time.
7. Don't put problems off. Immediately inform your coach of any issues or problems.

8. Use all the tools and resources available to you: professors, librarians, study guides, recorders, tutors, classmates, friends, etc.

### **Cheating & Plagiarism**

Students are expected to maintain high ethical standards in their academic work.

Students can expect to receive a failing grade for a class if caught cheating on an exam, intentionally plagiarizing a paper or web page, claiming undue credit for a course project, or other forms of academic misrepresentation and dishonesty. Faculty members are required to report these serious breaches of academic honesty to their Chair, Dean, Provost, Vice President of Academic Affairs, and Executive Director of Student Life.

In addition to grade penalties, students guilty of academic dishonesty may be placed on probation, temporarily suspended, or permanently expelled from the university by the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, as specified in the Student Handbook.