



## Frequently Asked Questions on Initial Eligibility

### ***What requirements do I need to be able to practice, play and get a scholarship at a Division I or Division II school?***

You need to complete the following:

- Graduate from high school;
- Complete a minimum of 14\* core courses;
- Present a minimum grade-point average (GPA) in those 14\* core courses; and
- Present a qualifying test score on either the ACT or SAT test.

*\* In Division I, the minimum number of core courses is 16 for students who enter a Division I school August 1, 2008, and after.*

Click [here](#) to review the specifics regarding core courses, GPA and test scores. (PDF file)

### ***How do I know if the courses I'm taking will count as core courses?***

You need to look at your high school's list of NCAA-approved core courses. Follow these steps:

- Go to the [NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse Web site](#)
- Click on "General Information"
- Click on "List of Approved Core Courses"
- Input your high school's code (if you know it) or search by your high school's name and state.
- Review the list

**Very important:** If a core course you took is not on the list, it won't be used in your eligibility determination. Courses that appear on your transcript must exactly match what is on the list.

### ***What do I do if a core course I took isn't on the list?***

See your high school counselor immediately. Someone at your high school is responsible for keeping your high school's list updated. It is important that they do this every year to make sure the core courses you are taking appear on the list.

### ***May a correspondence or independent study course be used to meet the 14 core-course requirements?***

Yes. Independent study, Internet or correspondence courses may be used as core courses if the following conditions are met:

- They meet all requirements for a core course;
- The instructor and student have access to one another during the course for the purpose of teaching, evaluating and providing assistance to the student;
- Evaluation of the student's work is conducted by the appropriate academic authorities in accordance with the high school's established academic policies; and
- The course is acceptable for any student and is placed on the high-school transcript.

***May courses taken in the eighth grade that are high-school core courses (e.g., Algebra I, Spanish 1, Freshman Composition) be used to meet the 14 core-course requirements?***

Courses taken in the eighth grade may not be used to satisfy the core-curriculum requirements regardless of the course content or level. However, in the rare event that students need to have courses taken in the eighth grade considered for eligibility purposes, there is a waiver process available.

***How is the NCAA core grade-point average different from a student's overall grade-point average?***

The NCAA core-course grade-point average is calculated using only NCAA-approved core courses in the required 14 core units. High-school grade-point averages generally include the grades from most or all courses attempted in grades nine through 12.

***Can weighted grades for honors or advanced placement courses be factored into the calculation of the student's core grade-point average?***

A school's normal practice of weighting honors or advanced courses may be used as long as the weighting is used for computing grade-point averages. Weighting cannot be used if the high school weights grades for the purpose of determining class rank. Additionally, in no instance may the student receive greater than 1.000 additional quality points for purposes of calculating the grade-point average for initial eligibility.

***What options are available to students who do not meet the NCAA initial-eligibility standards?***

Students who do not meet the initial-eligibility standards may be granted a waiver of their deficiency through an NCAA initial-eligibility waiver. NCAA academic committees have the authority to authorize waivers of the initial-eligibility requirements based on objective evidence that demonstrates circumstances in which a student's overall academic record warrants the waiver of the normal application of the legislation. The waiver must be filed by an NCAA institution (college or university) on behalf of the student.

***May students use courses taken after high-school graduation?***

Generally, students who enroll in a Division I institution may not use courses taken after high-school graduation to meet the NCAA core-curriculum requirements. Students who return after graduation to the high school from which they graduated may take courses to meet the core-course requirements. These students cannot enroll in college and participate in intercollegiate athletics until the following fall. Students enrolling in Division II institutions and students with disabilities (enrolling in either Division I or II) may use core courses taken after high-school graduation to meet the NCAA core-curriculum requirements, provided the courses are completed before full-time enrollment in a college or university. Please note that, for Division I, students with disabilities must have the required documentation: (a) a signed copy of a professional evaluation report that states the diagnosis of the student's disability; and (b) a copy of the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Individual Transition Plan (ITP) or Section 504 Plan or statement that relates to accommodations received by the student with the disability. The NCAA national office, not the clearinghouse, processes the information.

***May a student who has graduated repeat a course taken in grades nine through 12 and use the repeated course for purposes of meeting NCAA initial-eligibility requirements?***

Courses taken in grades nine through 12 may be repeated after graduation to meet NCAA Division I initial-eligibility core-course requirements, provided the courses are repeated at the high school from which the student graduated. If core courses are completed beyond the eighth semester, a student's initial full-time college enrollment cannot occur until the next academic year.

For Division II student-athletes, courses completed in grades nine through 12 may be repeated to meet initial-eligibility core-course requirements, provided the courses are repeated before initial full-time collegiate enrollment.

***When should a student register with the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse?***

Students should register with the clearinghouse after the completion of their junior year in high school. At this time, a transcript, which includes six semesters of grades, should be sent to the clearinghouse *from the high school*. Additionally, students should have their SAT or ACT test scores forwarded directly to the clearinghouse whenever they take the exam.

***May courses taken at a local college be used to meet the 14 core-course requirements?***

College courses may be used to satisfy core-curriculum requirements if the courses are accepted and awarded credit by the high school for any student and, meet all other requirements for core courses. For NCAA Division I only, such courses must be placed on the student's high-school transcript. Courses taken at a college will NOT appear on the high school's list of Approved Core Courses. The high school's list of NCAA Approved Core Courses will include only those courses taught/offered by the high school.

**Can students with a diagnosed disability use courses that are designated for students with a disability to meet NCAA core-course requirements?**

Students with appropriately diagnosed disabilities may use courses for students with disabilities for the purpose of meeting NCAA core-course requirements. Courses for students with disabilities must appear on the high school's list of NCAA Approved Core Courses in order for a student to receive NCAA credit for the course.

**May a nonstandard ACT/SAT be used for initial eligibility?**

Yes. Students with diagnosed disabilities may take a nonstandard ACT or SAT. The test score must still be provided to the clearinghouse, just as any other test.

**Does the prohibition against special education, remedial or compensatory courses apply to students with disabilities?**

No. In order for courses designated for students with disabilities to be approved, the course must be substantially comparable, qualitatively and quantitatively, as a regular core course offered in that academic area.

**Are vocational courses acceptable?**

Traditional vocational courses are not acceptable. These include courses such as agriculture, auto mechanics, accounting and health.

**What if a student's final high-school transcript contains an error or the student has grade changes that are not included on the first final transcript mailed to the clearinghouse?**

Once the clearinghouse has received all required documentation including a final high-school transcript for a student, they are able to produce a final certification report. If a high school sends a revised final transcript, the clearinghouse will not be able to use the changes. Instead, any changes to a student's final high-school transcript must be approved through the initial-eligibility waiver process.

**May courses taken at high school "A" be accepted if they appear on high school "B's" transcript?**

No. High school "A" may provide the clearinghouse with an official copy of high school "B's" transcript, but grades from one high school cannot be accepted on another high-school's transcript.

**How are students prioritized for processing at the clearinghouse?**

Students who have their status requested by an NCAA institution are prioritized by the clearinghouse for processing. If a student's eligibility status is never requested by a member institution, the clearinghouse may not process such a student's status.

[NOTE: This is not a complete list of NCAA regulations regarding initial eligibility. Please call or write the NCAA or access the NCAA Web site if you have specific questions.]

NCAA  
Membership Services  
P.O. Box 6222  
Indianapolis, IN 46206-6222  
317/917-6222 (phone)  
317/917-6622 (fax)  
800/638-3731 (NCAA Hotline)  
[www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org)

# Important Information About Division I and Division II Initial-Eligibility Changes

The Division I and Division II initial-eligibility requirements have changed.

**WHAT IS THE NEW RULE?** The new requirements increase the number of required core courses from 13 to 14. The additional course may come from any of the following areas: English, mathematics, natural/physical science, social science, foreign language, non-doctrinal religion or philosophy. Please see the [important notice below](#) about the elimination of computer science.

## ***For the classes of 2005, 2006 and 2007: Division I and Division II***

If you plan to enter college in 2005 or after, your eligibility will be determined under the new rule. That means that you must have 14 core courses to be eligible to practice, play and receive financial aid at a Division I or Division II school.

- Click [here](#) to read about the rule changes for Division I and II (PDF\*).

## ***For the class of 2008: Division I only – 16 core courses***

If you plan to enter college in 2008 or after, you will need to present 16 core courses in the following breakdown:

- 4 years of English
- **3** years of mathematics (Algebra I or higher)
- 2 years of natural/physical science (one must be a lab science)
- 1 year of additional English, math or science
- 2 years of social studies
- **4** years of additional core courses (from any area listed above, or from foreign language, non-doctrinal religion or philosophy)

Click [here](#) to read more about this new rule (PDF\*).

## Hot issues

### ***Computer science being eliminated for core-course purposes***

Computer science courses will no longer be able to be used for initial-eligibility purposes. This rule is effective August 1, 2005, for students first entering a collegiate institution on or after August 1, 2005. Computer science courses (such as programming) that are taught through the mathematics or natural/physical science departments and receive either math or science credit and are on the high school's list of approved core courses as math or science may be used after the August 1, 2005, date.

### ***Register online!***

Prospective student-athletes may register with the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse on-line. Simply go to the Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse Web site by clicking [here](#) or on the clearinghouse link on the right side of this page. By registering on-line, prospects will be able to view their eligibility information on-line, and will not have to call the clearinghouse for eligibility updates. On-line registration saves time, and allows prospective student-athletes to view their eligibility status up to six weeks faster than through the paper registration process.

### ***Changes in SAT/ACT tests***

The SAT and ACT have made changes their tests; one of the most significant changes is the addition of a writing component. On both the SAT and ACT, students will be asked to write an essay. The SAT writing section is mandatory, while the ACT writing section is optional.

The SAT will now have three parts: critical reading (formerly known as verbal), mathematics, and writing. Since each section is worth 200-800 points, the SAT score will now range from 600-2400.

**Will the NCAA require a writing test as part of its initial-eligibility requirements?**

The NCAA had determined that the writing component should not be required at the present time. The NCAA has noted the importance of reviewing research related to the impact of the writing component.

**How will the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse use the scores on the new SAT?**

Because the critical reading and math sections will still be scored on a 200-800 point scale, the clearinghouse will still combine those two sections for the combined score. The writing section will not be used. **The clearinghouse will use scores from the new SAT in combination with scores from the current SAT for the combined score.**

**What about ACT?**

ACT is also adding a writing component, but the ACT writing component is optional. The scores on the ACT will remain the same.

**Where can I get more information?**

The College Board has information about the new SAT on its Web site at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com), and ACT has information at [www.act.org](http://www.act.org).

*Specific questions regarding any of the information on this page may be answered by contacting the NCAA Membership Services staff at 317/917-6222.*