



The Weston Soccer Club College Choice Guide

Each season the Weston Soccer Club put forth a program and schedule of events, including its college information night, one on one meeting with their head coach and technical director, league and state cup play, as well as attending several prominent showcase tournaments throughout the country in order to allow players the opportunity to display their talents for college coaches.

If you are one of our future graduates you need to have a profile. This can be done via your team using the profile pages that are a part of the WFSC web site (email the webmaster at information@westonsoccer.net to find out more), or you can go about setting profiles up independently as a team. Please see Profile Tips housed in our College/NCAA information page at www.westonsoccer.net

The bulk of the responsibility for getting into college rests in this order, Player, Parents, and then Club. This is a collaborative effort and while the club provides a vehicle for a player to display their talents, it is the efforts of the Player that take the prominent role.

The optimum results occur when players along with parents take the lead in marketing themselves to colleges by directly expressing interest in a particular school through presentations, letters, emails, and phone calls to college coaches. Players must put thought into their correspondence with college coaches. With experience in the process the Club can advise players on content, however showing interest in a school is the first step to being recruited.

It is worth noting that coaches are inundated with inquiries of interest so short and concise content will be most effective. The objective is to inform the coach of interest, qualifications, where and when they may have an opportunity to evaluate the player.

1. Download and thoroughly read the NCAA guide for the Student Athlete. This can be found at our College/NCAA information page at www.westonsoccer.net
2. Before and especially during your Junior year in high school you need to gather information. There are various sources of information about the many great schools to choose from. There are books and magazines that list the different colleges with soccer program's, many give academic rankings, as well as descriptions of the soccer program including contact information for the coach's. The two listings that first come to mind are The Sport Source www.thesportsource.com and Soccer America's College Choice www.socceramerica.com



- 3.** Once you get one of the directories for the college programs go through the listings and put together a decent wish list of options which seem to be a good fit and meet your needs. Our technical directors are always available to provide you with further insight about these options if you request it and may in fact want to meet with you one on one to discuss these options.
- 4.** After putting together your list of schools, research and gather the relevant information from the universities you are interested in either visiting their web site; look for conference, roster size and class distribution (this is the number of graduating players) by phone, email, or by direct mail concerning their academic programs and entrance requirements. If you know what your future course of study will be then you may want to find out if they offer a program in that area and if it is a strong one. While academic standards should be your primary consideration in choosing a college, you will also need information about financial obligations, housing arrangements, the social environment, and the general atmosphere of the university. Ask yourself if you will be happy at the university if you never get to play soccer there. A lot of this information can be found on the university's web site.
- 5.** Next you will want information about the athletic and in particular, the soccer program. Evaluate your ability to make the team and eventually play. You want to be in a position to contribute to your team whatever level they compete at. Many of the programs are still in their early years and are starving for competent players. Others are well established and are only looking for players who will have immediate impact as freshman. Consider the financial support the program receives, the coach and his or her philosophy in regards to soccer and team conduct. If you are serious about your soccer and plan to keep improving yourself as a player and person, look at the how focused the people you will be playing with are. Is your commitment/focus level equal to those you will surround yourself with?
- 6.** Narrow down your list to anywhere from 5-10 schools that best meet your needs. Don't put all your eggs in one basket, you will need a back-up plan or two in case you don't get admitted to the school of your choice. Education is always the priority!
- 7.** Prepare a short and informative letter of introduction expressing your interest in possibly attending that particular university and your desire to perhaps play soccer there. Ask for information about application procedures, financial aid, and your desire to have the coach in question evaluate your ability. Include personal information, your ODP, Club, High School, and list your coach's names and phone numbers. Let them know when you will be graduating, if you have information about your cumulative GPA and or SAT scores include that as well. Gather information for the coach about where you will be performing throughout the season, tournaments, times and dates. Mail or email this information to your choices and await any responses. Please be considerate about the time and effort these coaches put in and follow up the response they send you. Feel free to call them by phone once you have established contact. Also don't get discouraged if you don't hear from them right away, especially if they are in the middle of their season.



8. Sort out the universities which most interest you and go on your campus visits. Our technical directors will be available with advice about your choices; however the bulk of the work has to come from the player and family. Communicate with the coach and school of your choice. Please be professional and responsible in your correspondence with these programs, you may open the door for other players from our club in future years. Be proud of your affiliation with the Weston Soccer Club and be an example for others. Remember we want to take pride in you; communicate and conduct yourself in an honest way.

Academic Eligibility for NCAA Division I Universities

Here are some key points regarding eligibility requirements for Division along with some recruiting rules and requirements.

Here is what you have to do to be eligible for Division I if you enroll in 2008 or later.

- Graduate from high school
- Complete a core curriculum of at least 16 academic courses (below)
- A Core Course is a recognized academic course that offers fundamental instruction in a specific area of study.
- Graduates Core Course Requirements
- 4 years English
- 3 years Math (Algebra 1 or higher)
- 2 years Natural or Physical Science (including at least 1 laboratory class)
- 2 years Social Science
- 1 additional year in English, Math, or Natural or Physical Science
- 4 years of extra core courses (from any category above, or foreign language, non doctrinal religion or philosophy).
- The sliding scale for core GPA and SAT/ACT score does allow a score below the 820 to meet eligibility standards. The core GPA will have to be above the 2.5 standard. It is no longer necessary to meet at least an 820. It does not happen often, but it is possible to have an SAT <820 and a core GPA > 2.5.

Basic Division I Recruiting Rules

Players become "prospective student athletes" when they begin ninth-grade classes. Players become "recruited prospective student athletes" at a particular college if any representative of the college's athletic interests approaches them about enrolling and participating in athletics at that college.

Activities that cause a student athlete to consider themselves recruited:

- (1) Official visits to that college
- (2) Getting phone calls from a representative of that college
- (3) An off campus visit by a representative of that college.



A student-athlete is eligible to receive "general" university information through the mail at any time. Coaches can only make phone calls after July 1st and completion of the Junior year of high school and are limited to one per week with the following exceptions where calls may be unlimited:

- During the five days prior to the "official" visit to the college.
- On the day of a coach's off campus contact with the student athlete.
- On the initial date for signing the National Letter of Intent through the two days after the signing date.
- A student-athlete may call a coach as often as they like (this will be at the prospect expense). Please be advised that when calling a coach before July 1st you will **not** receive a call back as it will be a breach of NCAA rules.

Letters from coaches, faculty members and students are not permitted until September 1 at the beginning of the junior year of high school.

A college coach may "contact" a student athlete in person off campus only after July 1 after completion of the junior year in high school. Any face to face meeting between a college coach and the player or parents of a player, during which any of you say more than "hello" is considered a "contact". Coaches are permitted no more than three off campus contacts.

An evaluation is any off campus activity used to assess a student athlete's academic and or athletic qualifications. A college coach may not make more than four evaluations during each academic year.

During a student athlete's senior year they are eligible to go on "official" visits to a campus if they are invited and notified by mail. Players should make it clear to the coach in question if they want to accept the invitation as a student-athlete is limited to a total of five "official" visits. It would be my personal suggestion that players save those "official" visits for universities where extended travel is necessary. An "official" visit (no more than 48 hours) simply means that the costs are covered by the university. During any time, student athletes may go on "unofficial" campus visits as often as they like. During these "unofficial" visits players may contact the coach and receive any information requested including a campus tour. Nothing may be paid for by the coach or program in question or the visit becomes "official". Players can not go on an "official" visit until they give the college their academic transcripts and a score from the SAT taken on a national test date. The transcript may be a photocopy of official high school transcripts and in most cases the college will use the services of the Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse to validate credentials.



Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse

A central clearinghouse will certify athletic eligibility. If as a college freshman you intend to participate in college athletics, you must register and be certified by the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse. This should be done at the end of your junior year in high school. High School counselors can obtain registration materials at no cost by calling the clearinghouse at (877) 262-1492 or on line at the link below. In order to be registered, student athletes must complete the student release form (SRF), mail one copy of the form to the clearinghouse along with the \$50 registration fee (sometimes you can get the fee waived), give two other signed copies to your high school counselor, good idea to make a third copy for your records.

You can also register on line at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net. Make sure one of your high school officials works with you on this because they have forms they must submit as well. The high school must send in a copy of the form, along with an official copy of transcripts to the clearinghouse. After graduation the school must send in the other form along with a copy of final transcripts that confirms graduation. If you have questions go on line or use the customer service number to ask questions (877) 262-1492. The high school must also annually file one Form 48-H with the clearinghouse listing the school's core courses.

National Letter of Intent

If players are offered an athletic scholarship they may be asked to sign a "Letter of Intent". This is a binding agreement between an institution and the player stating they will accept the scholarship offer and are committing to the college for that year. Once a player signs the agreement, it becomes the player's responsibility to notify all coaches who continue to recruit them, that they are bound to the college in question. Be aware there are certain dates between which you are able to sign these agreements. This agreement protects the coach and his/her scholarship investment, it also protects the player so that the scholarship cannot be withdrawn and offered to another player. There is also a website to answer questions about the letter of intent www.national-letter.org

Further questions about this process should be directed to your head coach and/or technical director.

Good luck!

