STUDENT-ATHLETES: RECRUITMENT

The Department of Athletics is committed to following all University, Southeastern Conference and NCAA rules and regulations related to the recruitment of prospective student-athletes. Successful recruiting is the single, most critical area related to the future of Louisiana State University's athletics program. Therefore, recruitment must be approached with commitment, confidence, aggressiveness and expertise.

The Recruiting Coordinator, or the designated recruiting coach of each sport, coordinates the evaluation, selection and recruitment of prospective student-athletes. The Associate Athletic Director for Compliance monitors recruiting activities to ensure compliance with University, SEC and NCAA rules and regulations.

Compliance with SEC and NCAA Regulations
A thorough knowledge of and strict adherence to all pertinent SEC and NCAA rules and regulations is vitally important when recruiting student-athletes. Violations, however unintentional, have resulted in adverse publicity and sanctions for many colleges and universities. All recruiting activities are governed by official guidelines and require accurate documentation and control by coaches and staff to ensure compliance.

Coaches and administrative staff members involved in recruiting are responsible for upholding and enforcing applicable regulations. Moreover, coaching contracts contain a clause permitting the University to dismiss or financially penalize individuals found guilty of NCAA violations. These provisions include persons who have knowledge of violations but fail to report them.

The Associate Athletic Director for Compliance monitors any changes in recruiting rules and regulations and disseminates the information to the appropriate individuals. Coaches and administrative staff are expected to read the NCAA Manual, The NCAA News, SEC Compliance Corner and other publications to stay informed, as well.

The NCAA Bylaw governing recruiting activities greatly limits the role of alumni in recruiting activities. Specifically, "representatives of an institution's athletics interests are prohibited from making in-person, on- or off-campus recruiting contacts, or written or telephonic communications with a prospect or the prospect's relatives or legal guardians." This ruling exists to reduce major recruiting violations, which in the past have been committed by over-zealous alumni and boosters. Prohibited recruiting activities by "representatives of athletic interests" are defined in detail in the NCAA Manual, LSU Guide to Rules Compliance and related interpretations. A summarized copy of these rules can be obtained from the Associate Athletic Director for Compliance and is available for distribution. It is the responsibility of all coaches.
and staff involved in recruiting to be thoroughly familiar with NCAA Recruiting Bylaw 13, as well as its interpretations, and to keep alumni and other supporters informed regarding current policy.

As with all NCAA rules and regulations, coaches and staff must enforce this provision to the best of their knowledge and ability. Alumni may continue to be involved in activities which relate to the normal admissions procedures applicable to all prospective students, provided personal contact is not made for the purpose of athletic recruiting. A bona fide LSU alumni organization may entertain prospects at luncheons, teas or dinners at which prospective students (student-athletes and non-athletes) of that immediate locale are guests.

All rules and regulations relevant to recruiting are carefully detailed in the NCAA Manual, the Southeastern Conference Manual and "The NCAA Guide for the College Bound Student-Athlete" brochure published by the NCAA.

**Identification of Prospects**

Taking into consideration budget limitations, coaches are to identify particular geographic concentrations of desirable student-athletes for their respective sport. These prospective student-athlete pools become the basis of the program's overall recruiting strategy and are ranked according to specific needs.

The recruiting office of each sport maintains a "future file" on young athletes who demonstrate the potential for being competitive in intercollegiate sports. Such a file may contain newspaper clippings, records of past performances, etc., in addition to information supplied by coaches, parents, alumni and the prospect.

Each spring, the Recruiting Coordinator, or the designated recruiting coach from each sport, contacts high school coaches in the target areas and solicits information on the most talented players who are completing their junior year in high school. The Recruiting List form is used to obtain the prospect's name, address, phone, birthday, position, height and weight. Additional information is obtained on prospects by observing films and actual play, reviewing published literature, monitoring their level of academic progress and reviewing general character references.

**Distribution of Information**

The Recruiting Coordinator, or the recruiting coach of each sport, handles the distribution of printed materials to prospective student-athletes. Material on LSU, including both academic and athletic programs, is sent to high schools, junior colleges and individual students.
The NCAA allows the University to send the following printed materials to prospective student-athletes:

1. Official academic, admissions and student-services publications published by the institution and available to all students; (Bylaw 13.4.1)

2. One (1) annual athletics media guide (with only one color of printing inside the covers) per sport, or one (1) annual athletics recruiting brochure (with only one color of printing inside the covers) per sport; (Bylaw 13.4.1)

3. One (1) student-athlete handbook (with only one color of printing throughout the publication) to describe the institution's athletics department policies governing the conduct and issues of student-athletes; (Bylaw 13.4.1) This handbook can only be issued during official and/or unofficial visits and can only be mailed to prospects who have signed a NLI.

4. One (1) wallet-size playing schedule card per sport; (Bylaw 13.4.1)

5. Drug-testing information;

6. Summer camp brochures; (Bylaw 13.4.1)

7. Institutional Note Cards; (Bylaw 13.4.1)

8. General correspondence, including postcards issued by U.S. Postal Service and letters; (Bylaw 13.4.1)

9. Newspaper clippings, which may not be assembled in any form of scrapbook; (Bylaw 13.4.1) and

10. Pre-enrollment information regarding orientation, conditioning, academics and practice activities, provided the prospect has signed a National Letter of Intent. (Bylaw 13.4.1)

In addition, prospects receive the "NCAA Guide for the College Bound Student-Athlete" which explains academic eligibility, financial aid (i.e., scholarships) and recruiting rules.

**Creation of Timetables and Schedules**

Each Head Coach must ensure that his/her staff members involved in recruiting are aware of the recruiting calendar for the current year. Each Head Coach may create a timetable or schedule for his/her designated sport to assist coaches in the recruiting process. Such materials may include dates for the following:
Non-contact, contact and evaluation periods;

Mass mailings;

Off-campus recruiting;

On-campus recruiting weekends;

National Letters of Intent signing days;

Admission and financial aid application deadlines; and

University admissions examinations.

**Evaluation of Academic Records**

At the time of initial contact with a prospective student-athlete, the recruiting coach should request a copy of all transcripts, which reflect the academic performance of the student for classes already completed, as well as a listing of subjects in which the student is currently enrolled or will complete prior to enrollment at LSU (should the student elect to attend).

Such transcripts from all secondary and post-secondary institutions, as well as test scores for ACT and SAT tests, must be provided to the Compliance Coordinator. The transcripts are forwarded to LSU Admissions and the Academic Center for Student-Athletes for evaluation as to whether the prospective student-athlete is likely to be a "qualifier," and to meet the University's admission requirements. (For specific academic qualifications, see Policy 502B, Student-Athletes: Admissions, and 502C, Student-Athletes: Eligibility, in this Manual.) This information and data must be obtained to properly evaluate a prospective student-athlete's status.

Coaches should consider the evaluation of a prospect's academic record in determining further recruiting efforts. Moreover, the receipt of such records should be verified before an invitation is extended to a recruit for the official campus visit.

**Unofficial Campus Visits**

Prospective student-athletes are welcome to visit LSU at their own expense. On such unofficial visits to the LSU campus, prospective student-athletes are provided with complimentary admissions to Departmental athletics events as allowed by the NCAA. (Note: SEC regulations prohibit the issuance of complimentary admissions to prospective student-athletes to contests held off campus.) In addition, the Recruiting Coordinator, or designated coach, may arrange for the prospect to meet with faculty, student-athletes, Departmental administrators and other appropriate individuals. However, extreme care must be taken to ensure that prospects are not involved in any on-campus activity that might be construed as entertainment or receive any assistance with travel, meals or lodging while making an unofficial visit to the campus.
Coordination of Official Visits

The Compliance office must approve all official visits to the LSU campus. All prospective student-athletes that visit LSU on an official visit are required to present a copy of his/her unofficial transcript and either ACT, SAT, PSAT, or PLAN test scores. The Recruiting Coordinator, or the Head Coach, sends a written invitation for the one (1) paid visit allowed recruits under the NCAA Recruiting Bylaw. A copy of each letter verifying the official visit is included in the travel authorization papers and then retained for file in the recruiting office.

Prior to the visit, the following steps are taken:

1. The Recruiting Coordinator, or designated coach, in conjunction with the Coordinator of Travel, coordinates travel arrangements for the visit. For more specific information, see Policy 601C, Travel: Prospective Student-Athletes, in this manual.

2. The Recruiting Coordinator, or designated coach, notifies the prospect in writing (see Appendix 502A-5) that this scheduled visit counts as one of the permissible five (5) paid visits to NCAA member institutions. The letter also informs the prospect of the applicable NCAA rules affecting the visit.

3. The Recruiting Coordinator, or designated coach, compiles a schedule of planned events for the official visit. This list should include:

   o A schedule of planned activities and locations for such activities;

   o A preliminary budget for cost of activities (For detailed guidelines regarding allowable expenses, see Policy 601C, Travel: Prospective Student-Athletes, in this Manual); and

   o A list of all persons involved in each activity (including coaches, spouses, player hosts, Departmental staff members and faculty members).

Planning Activities for the Official Visit

There are particular objectives to be met when planning activities for an official visit. After visiting the campus, a prospect should be able to adequately assess whether LSU's campus environment, as well as academic and athletic programs are best suited to his/her needs, and provide the best opportunity for academic and athletic success. The prospect should also be aware of all procedures associated with admission to LSU, and his/her obligations to the University and the Department of Athletics.
Each visitation is to be individually tailored to the prospect, focusing upon particular academic interests or specialties. The Recruiting Coordinator, or the recruiting coach, arranges for meetings with faculty, student-athletes, students, coaches, trainers, equipment managers and the Director of Athletics, when appropriate.

A prospective student-athlete may attend athletic events while on his/her one, official visit. The Recruiting Coordinator, or the designated coach, makes arrangements for complimentary admissions with the Ticket Office, ensuring compliance with NCAA rules and regulations. For additional information related to the entertainment of prospects, see Policy 408D, Ticket Office: Complimentary Tickets, and Policy 601C, Travel: Prospective Student Athletes, in this Manual.

Those involved in planning the official visit should be aware and take advantage of any group's on-campus social events, such as faculty gatherings, student organization functions, fraternity parties, etc., that introduce LSU student life to the prospect. **However, care should be exercised so as not to violate any NCAA rules and regulations.**

Finally, the goal of recruiting activities is to provide each recruit with a positive picture of the University and its surroundings. Activities other than meals (e.g., horseback riding, picnics, etc.), should be preplanned and approved according to the procedures outlined above.

**Student Hosts**

The Recruiting Coordinator, or the designated coach, assigns each prospect a host/hostess for the official campus visit. In selecting a host/hostess, every effort is made to match the prospect with an individual whom he/she shares something in common (e.g., geographic area, high school, academic major, playing position, personality, etc.).

The host/hostess is expected to provide general information concerning campus life, to answer questions about the University and the Department of Athletics, to show the prospect around LSU and the surrounding area, and most importantly, to make him/her feel welcome to the intercollegiate athletics program.

Students and student-athletes acting as hosts must be fully informed about all NCAA rules and regulations which affect recruiting. The Information Sheet for Student Hosts form is provided to each student host by the Recruiting Coordinator, or the designated coach, who reviews the rules and regulations carefully with the host to ensure his/her understanding and compliance. Each student host is required to sign and date the form agreeing to comply with these regulations (Appendix 502A-6).
The NCAA rules allow the University to give a student host/hostess $30 per day which is to be used to pay for entertainment and snacks while the prospect is on-campus for the official visit. Prior to the prospect's arrival, the Recruiting Coordinator, or the designated coach, obtains the money from the Athletic Business Office, requires the host to sign a receipt for the funds, disburses the money, informs the host of applicable NCAA regulations and provides the host with background information on the prospect.

**Off-Campus Contacts**

In-person, off-campus contacts with prospective student-athletes, their relatives or legal guardians must be made by recognized staff members of the institution. **Any contact by an outside representative of the University's athletic interests is expressly prohibited.**

In all sports, contacts with prospects, their relatives or legal guardian are limited by NCAA Bylaw 13.1.6 to three (3) contacts per prospect, prior to and on the occasion of the signing of a National Letter of Intent. Additionally, the number of visits to a high school (or junior college) is restricted to one (1) visit a week during the contact period, regardless of the number of prospects enrolled at the school, and only a total of three (3) contacts with a prospect can be made at the prospect's educational institution. In the sport of Football, each institution is limited to six (6) in-person, off-campus recruiting contacts.

Coaches should recognize that the prospective student-athlete's home is a strong and influential environment in which to recruit. Home visits provide the opportunity to present a positive view of the Department of Athletics and the University as a whole to the family.

Prior to a coach's departure for a visit with a prospect, an approved Individual Travel and/or Car Rental Approval Request form must be on file with the Athletic Business Office (See Policy 601A, Travel: Individual Staff Members, in this Manual). Coaches are required to log their off-campus contacts and evaluations in the Assistant Coach Systems program and submit this information with their travel vouchers.

**Administration of National Letter of Intent**

All copies of the National Letter of Intent must be submitted to the Associate Athletic Director for Compliance as early as possible prior to the official signing date. As an award of financial aid always accompanies the Letter of Intent, the request should include the data necessary to validate the proposed financial aid award. (See Policy 502D, Student-Athletes: Financial Aid, in this Manual for procedures concerning approval and the granting of athletically related financial aid.)

When signing the official National Letter of Intent (see Appendix 502A-7 for samples), prospective student-athletes are also asked to sign the financial aid agreement. The National Letter of Intent Program is administered by the Collegiate Commissioners Association and serves as the official commitment from the student-athlete concerning his/her enrollment plans. The Athletic Director or designee must sign the letter prior to distribution to the prospect.
According to NCAA Bylaw 13.1.6.7, any in-person, off-campus contact made with a prospect for purposes of signing the National Letter of Intent or other commitment to attend the institution is prohibited.

Upon receiving notification that a prospective student-athlete has signed a National Letter of Intent with an institution other than LSU, no further recruiting efforts are to be made.

**Reporting Recruiting Activities and Expenses**

The Department of Athletics must retain complete documentation of all recruiting activities. Although most activities are documented with expense reimbursements, it is essential that coaches are careful to maintain detailed records of all their recruiting activities. Therefore, when submitting expense reports for recruiting activities, coaches should submit a summary of such activities for the period of time covered by the expense report as documented in the Assistant Coach System program to the Recruiting Coordinator.

Within ten (10) days after a recruit completes an official campus visit, the Recruiting Coordinator, or the sport's designated coach, should submit a voucher report to the Associate Athletic Director for Business, which includes the following:

1. A list of all activities that occurred during the visit;
2. A list of all participants in those activities;
3. A summary of all costs associated with the visit (itemized by event);
4. Copies of all receipts; and
5. A justification of attendance for those who participated in events, but were not listed in the preliminary approval report.

This report may be the same as that submitted for other purposes (e.g., expense reimbursement, etc.), but should be a final summary of the time period's activities for recruiting documentation.

**Assistant Coach Systems Database**

The Athletic Department has invested significant time and money into a recruiting program called Assistant Coach Systems (ACS). ACS is personalized for each sports needs and is a working database that allows coaches to enter all recruits along with biographical and athletic information. The ACS system also allows coach to enter information about contacts/evaluations as well as phone call information.

LSU
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