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Ethical Recruiting Policy

Note: Make sure that this policy is customized to fit your athletic department structure, position titles, philosophy, institutional policy, and athletic governance association rules.

1.0 General. Recruiting student-athletes who can be academically and athletically successful is a cornerstone philosophical belief of the athletic department and reflects a commitment to a recruiting approach that is highly ethical, enhances the institution's and department's reputation for integrity, reinforces the academic objectives of the admissions department, and results in securing athletes who have a high level of satisfaction with their academic and athletic experience. These goals can be accomplished only if coaches' interactions with recruited student-athletes are based on integrity and honesty. The focus of all recruiting contacts should be on the positive benefits of attending the institution and participating on athletic teams as well as providing the families with enough information and time to assess whether this school is the right fit for their son or daughter.

2.0 Relations With Admissions Personnel. The athletic department is committed to positive interactions between coaches and admissions office personnel. A collaborative relationship rather than a contentious one is essential and expected. All coaches and athletic staff members are expected to understand the goals of the admissions department and the way in which athletic recruitment contributes to those goals. Coaches are required to direct all admissions inquiries about specific prospective student-athletes to the designated athletic department liaison.

3.0 Negative Recruiting. Negative recruiting is not an acceptable tactic. Coaches are prohibited from saying or implying anything negative about another institution, other athletic departments, or coaches from other institutions. If a prospective student-athlete or parent tries to engage a coach in a discussion about another institutions' program or coach, the coach should respond by saying that our staff focuses on the benefits or what we can provide at our institution rather than stating opinions about other programs. Violation of this policy may result in immediate termination of employment.

4.0 Full Disclosure of Academic Information. Coaches must be well versed on the various academic programs and work to arrange meetings with appropriate academic representatives (faculty, department chairs, classroom visits, and so on) if the student-athlete expresses a specific academic interest. Coaches must be honest about a student's chance to gain entrance to the institution.

5.0 Comprehensive Assessment. Coaches should make every effort to make a full evaluation of a recruited athlete's athletic skill and ability either in person or through videotape assessment and through communication with the prospective student-athlete's coaches. In addition, coaches shall be expected to assess the prospect's academic record and classroom effort and habits. Coaches shall also be responsible for asking the prospect's coaches and counselors whether the athlete has exhibited any behavioral concerns or disciplinary challenges; has a criminal record (only if disclosure of such juvenile records is permitted in that state); or has a record of abuse of prescription, recreational, or illegal drugs.

6.0 Full Transparency. All coaches shall be committed to full transparency and honesty with regard to the athletic program experience and place within the sport program at our institution. Specifically, coaches are expected to do the following:

- Provide recruits with statistical evidence of the academic, athletic, and career success of past and current student-athletes
- Help student-athletes and their families understand the financial obligations required to attend the institution and the type of financial aid available
- Offer a scholarship only when it has been fully determined and never promise that a scholarship will be forthcoming in the future
- Provide recruited student-athletes with access to current team members, without any coaches present, to ask questions regarding the program
- Never promise the athlete a spot on the team or imply that he or she will be a starter or significant reserve
- Fully discuss the following issues and expectations: (a) current and future roster size, (b) number of returning players and number of returning starters, (c) tryout procedures, (d) expectations during the nontraditional seasons, (e) expectations regarding preseason conditioning programs, (f) the option of being a multisport athlete, (g) the availability of other team opportunities such as training trips to various locations, and (h) any financial, fund-raising, or community service obligations tied to participation

7.0 Pressure to Commit to Institution. Pressure should never be applied to a prospective student-athlete to apply for early decision or make a commitment to enroll (sign a letter of intent) if he or she is not fully ready. Doing so may not be in the best interest of either the student-athlete or the institution.

8.0 Closure of Recruiting Process. If the recruited athlete is no longer a priority, he or she should be informed that the spot has been filled. Do not simply stop calling. Similarly, if the prospect indicates that he or she is no longer considering our institution, a gracious closure letter to the prospect and his or her parents should be issued.

9.0 Compliance With Governance Rules and Regulations. All recruiting activities must meet all institutional, department, and governing body rules and regulations. Any recruiting violation may result in immediate termination of employment. Any inadvertent violation of rules shall be immediately reported to the associate director for rules compliance.

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