



Frequently Asked Questions As You Consider Colleges

Athletics

What positions will I play on your team?

It is not always obvious. Most coaches want to be flexible, so you might not receive a definite answer.

What other players may be competing at the same position?

The response could give you an idea of when you can expect to be a starter.

Will I be redshirted my first year?

The school's policy on redshirting may impact you both athletically and academically.

What expectations do you have for training and conditioning?

This will reveal the college or university's commitment to a training and conditioning program.

How would you best describe your coaching style?

Every coach has a particular style that involves different motivational techniques and discipline. You need to know if a coach's teaching style matches your learning style.

When does the head coach's contract end? How long does the coach intend to stay?

The answer could be helpful. Do not make any assumptions about how long a coach will be at a school. If the coach leaves, does this change your mind about the school/program?

What are preferred, invited and uninvited walk-on situations? How many do you expect to compete? How many earn a scholarship?

Situations vary from school to school.

Who else are you recruiting for my position?

Coaches may consider other student-athletes for every position.

Is medical insurance required for my participation? Is it provided by the college?

You may be required to provide proof of insurance.

If I am seriously injured while competing, who is responsible for my medical expenses?

Different colleges have different policies.

What happens if I want to transfer to another school?

You may not transfer without the permission of your current school's athletics administration. Ask how often coaches grant this privilege and ask for an example of a situation in which permission was not granted.

What other factors should I consider when choosing a college?

Be realistic about your athletics ability and the type of athletics experience you would enjoy. Some student-athletes want to be part of a particular athletics program, even if that means little or no playing time. Other considerations include coaching staff and style. Of course, the ideal is to choose a college or university that will provide you with both the educational and athletics opportunities you want.

Academics

How good is the department in my major? How many students are in the department? What credentials do faculty members hold? What are graduates of the program doing after school?

What percentage of players on scholarship graduate?

The response will suggest the school's commitment to academics. You might want to ask two follow-up questions:

1. What percentage of incoming students eventually graduate?
2. What is the current team's grade-point average?

What academic support programs are available to student-athletes?

Look for a college that will help you become a better student.

If I have a diagnosed and documented disability, what kind of academic services are available?

Special academic services may help you achieve your academic goals.

How many credit hours should I take in season and out of season?

It is important to determine how many credit hours are required for your degree and what pace you will follow to obtain that degree.

Are there restrictions in scheduling classes around practice?

NCAA rules prevent you from missing class for practice.

Is summer school available? If I need to take summer school, will it be paid for by the college?

You may need to take summer school to meet academic and/or graduation requirements.

College Life

What is a typical day for a student-athlete?

The answer will give you a good idea of how much time is spent in class, practice, study and travel. It also will give you a good indication of what coaches expect.

What are the residence halls like?

The response should give you a hint of how comfortable you would be in your room, study areas, community bathrooms and at the laundry facilities. Also ask about the number of students in a room, co-ed dorms and the rules governing life in the residence halls.

Must student-athletes live on campus?

If "yes," ask about exceptions.

Financial Aid

How much financial aid is available for both the academic year and summer school? What does your scholarship cover?

How long does my scholarship last?

Most people think a “full ride” is good for four years, but athletics financial aid is available on a one-year, renewable basis.

What are my opportunities for employment while I am a student?

Find out if you can be employed in season, out of season or during vacation periods.

Exactly how much will the athletics scholarship be? What will and will not be covered?

It is important to understand what college expenses your family is responsible for so you can arrange to pay those. Educational expenses can be paid with student loans and government grants, but it takes time to apply for them. Find out early so you can get something lined up.

Am I eligible for additional financial aid? Are there any restrictions?

Sometimes a student-athlete cannot accept a certain type of scholarship because of NCAA limitations. If you will be receiving other scholarships, let the coach and financial aid officer know so they can determine if you may accept additional dollars.

Who is financially responsible if I am injured while competing?

You need to understand your financial obligations if you suffer an injury while participating in athletics.

Under what circumstances would my scholarship be reduced or canceled?

Coaches should be able to give you some idea of how players are evaluated from year to year and how these decisions are made. The college or university may have a policy governing renewal of athletics aid. Ask if such a policy exists and read it.

Are there academic criteria tied to maintaining the scholarship?

Some colleges or universities add academic requirements to scholarships (e.g., minimum grade-point average).

What scholarship money is available after eligibility is exhausted to help me complete my degree?

It may take longer than four years to complete a college degree program. Some colleges assist student-athletes financially as they complete their degrees. Ask how such aid is awarded. You may have to work with the team or in the athletics department to qualify for this aid.

What scholarship money is available if I suffer an athletics career-ending injury?

Not every institution continues to provide an athletics scholarship to a student-athlete who can no longer compete because of a career-ending injury.

Will my scholarship be maintained if there is a change in coaches?

A coach may not be able to answer this, but the athletics director may.