

MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICE - FAQ

MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICE: QUESTIONS TO ASK, FACTORS TO CONSIDER

Before committing to a college program, all prospective student-athletes must be fully informed of all aspects of a university and its athletic program. Below are some questions and issues that should be considered of any program and its personnel, as well as the university at large:

Personnel

- How long has the head coach been there?
- How long have the assistant coaches been there?
- Is the status of the head coach secure or shaky?
- Is the head coach likely to move on during the athlete's career?
- Is this position only a stepping-stone for the coach?
- Is the coach likely to retire before the athlete graduates?
- How long has the athletic director been there?
- Do the athletic director and head coach have a good relationship?

Program

- Will the school honor the scholarship if a career-ending injury occurs?
- Are freshmen typically red-shirted?
- What is the team's style of play? It is compatible with the athlete's preferences and experience?
- Will the athlete have to change positions in college?
- What has been the transfer rate on the team?
- Is the program in good standing – is it under investigation? Are any sanctions looming?
- What types of players are being recruited?
- Have there been a lot of one-year wonders that com and go?

Academic Aspects of the Program

- Are certain majors discouraged?
- Does the coach limit majors because they are more time-consuming, interfere with practices, or run a greater risk of ineligibility?
- Is the concern with maintaining eligibility or with helping student-athletes earn a meaningful degree?
- What are the most popular majors on the team?
- What have players majored in? Which concentrations? Why?

- What has been the graduation rate over the last five years? The last 10 years?
- What careers and/or further education have players pursued over the last five years? The last 10 years?
- What types of career counseling programs are available?

While NCAA rules require the scholarship-granting institutions provide formal academic support systems for their athletes, student should learn more about the programs being considered. They should find out what is expected of them in terms of mandatory study halls and other available recourses.

University at Large

- Does the school offer the major the student-athlete wants?
- Does the school have a graduate program for student who graduate in four years, but have red-shirted and have a fifth year to exhaust their eligibility?
- Is the Greek system a big part of campus life?
- What are the housing arrangements? Dorm availability? Apartments?
- How do athletics fit into the culture of the university?
- What is the relationship between the university and the local town?

Miscellaneous

- During campus visits, student-athletes should be sure to meet as wide a range of students as possible.
- Student-athletes should try to get a sense of the people – beyond the team and the athletic department – who will be making up the university community they will join.
- Student-athletes should try to attend a class and speak with faculty in the academic department(s) they are considering for a major.
- Student-athletes should meet with the academic support team for the athletic department.

Fundamental Questions for Any Prospective College Student

While being a prospective college athlete adds another dimension to the college search, the following fundamental questions, as well as comparable others, should also be remembered and addressed.