



Aquinas College Student-Athlete Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to communicate the policies and procedures of the Aquinas College Athletic Department. It is important that each student-athlete understands the goals and expectations that the Aquinas College Athletic Department has established. If you have any questions on any of the information please contact the Athletic Director or Assistant Athletic Directors.

Aquinas College Mission Statement

Aquinas College, an inclusive educational community rooted in the Catholic Dominican tradition, provides a liberal arts education with a global perspective, emphasizes career preparation focused on leadership and service to others, and fosters a commitment to lifelong learning dedicated to the pursuit of truth and the common good.

Aquinas College Athletic Mission Statement

We will offer student-athletes a quality experience which will allow them the opportunity to maximize their potential academically, athletically, and socially.

We will emphasize personal responsibility and growth (emotional, social, physical, and mental) through development of a solid work ethic, interpersonal relations, and the positive aspects of competition.

Aquinas College Athletic Objectives

The objectives stated are defined by the Aquinas College Athletic Department in an effort to develop each student-athlete in a positive manner.

1. **The desire to strive whole-heartedly toward excellence** – The key word here is DESIRE. No one ever finds excellence without striving for it. And, no one ever strives for excellence or anything else, without first being filled with the DESIRE to strive.
2. **The realization that nothing of any real value is ever achieved without hard work and dedication** – Don't be distracted by the well-worn cliches "hard work" and "dedication". The focus should be on the words REAL VALUE. Trophies, medals and awards tarnish and yellow with age. Memories and a sense of pride that we build as we invest ourselves in the acceptance of challenges and in the process of achieving live on in our memories, and even grow in value with time.
3. **A healthy attitude toward competition** – Competition is a fundamental and basic principle in American society. Competition is a catalyst that helps create the opportunity for success. Competition is no more than individuals or teams competing against each other to see who can do a particular activity best on that day. The goal is to be a great



competitor, anxious to test your abilities, strategies and preparations against another, free from attaching feelings of self-worth and self-esteem to the outcome.

4. **A spirit of cooperation and teamwork** – Most individuals will work hard to get what they desire, but when people are focused on getting something, what they most likely will end up getting is frustrated. We can't always control what we are going to get or receive. **But we have total control over what we give!** When individuals are alert and sensitive to the needs of others, and respond unconditionally to help meet those needs, then everyone wins!
5. **Self-confidence through the use of one's own decision making capabilities** – Being self-confident and able to make decisions for oneself, about oneself and, above all, by one's self are skills just as are running, jumping, shooting, swinging and throwing. Athletes learn to be confident of themselves in demanding and stressful sports settings when they are allowed to practice making decisions.
5. **The desire to have fun** – In this context we speak of **FUN** as the great sense of pride and satisfaction one experiences when mastering a skill, successfully completing a challenge, or the excitement felt in achieving a personal best.
6. **The ability to be able to accept both victory and defeat with dignity, class and appreciation of the efforts of others.**

Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference

Aquinas College is a member of the competitive Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference (WHAC). The member institutions include: Aquinas College, Concordia University, Cornerstone University, Davenport University, Indiana Institute of Technology, Madonna University, Siena Heights University, and University of Michigan (Dearborn).

Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference Code of Conduct

Statement of Philosophy

The Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference and its member school seek to provide ethical and competitive opportunities that challenge and stretch each participant; thereby serving as teaching and learning laboratories.

Some Guiding Principles

- Character building and ethics are embodied in the concept of positive sporting behavior.
- Participation is a privilege earned, not a right demanded.
- The spirit of the rules is as important as the letter of the rules.



- Sports leadership personnel (administrators, coaches, and officials) have a duty to promote positive sporting behavior by teaching, advocating, modeling, and enforcing ethical principles.

National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics

Aquinas College competes in accordance with the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) guidelines.

Team Selection/Team Participation

Each athletic team at Aquinas College will offer open try-outs. Selection of the team is the responsibility of the coaches of those teams. Coaches should explain the criteria for gaining membership on the team before practice begins.

Equipment

It is the athlete's responsibility to properly maintain, clean and secure all equipment issued and return all issued equipment at the end of the season or pay the replacement cost for items not returned. A student-athlete not returning issued equipment/uniforms will be billed through the Aquinas College Student Accounts Department. Fees must be paid in order to register for classes. Also, graduating seniors will have transcripts held if there is an account balance.

Team Fundraising

Major team trips (including spring trips for teams) and some other extras are only partially paid for by the college. Teams fundraise for the remainder of these costs. Coaches will give (in writing) the players responsibility for that event IN ADVANCED. Players are then responsible for that amount of money either through taking advantage of these fundraising opportunities or through out of pocket payment. This bill must be paid for before the time of the trip. Coaches will distribute a payment schedule sheet to all players. Unpaid debt can be placed on a student's account through the business office.

Student-Athlete

a. Defined:

A student-athlete shall be defined as any individual who is an Aquinas College student and is also participating as a member of any one of the intercollegiate athletic teams sponsored by the College. All student-athletes will be required to adhere to all of the rules and expectations defined in this handbook.

b. Responsibilities:

1. Team:



Each student-athlete will be responsible to abide by all rules unique to a particular team. Each coach may have specific rules governing that team and these must be followed.

2. School:

Student-athletes are expected to live up to the responsibility of being an Aquinas College student. This includes abiding by the Student Conduct Code and all other Aquinas College policies. Failure to abide by these rules will be brought to and dealt with by the Dean of Students in consultation with the athletic department.

3. Student Athlete Websites:

The Athletic Department cautions use of personal websites by student-athletes such as facebook and MySpace. The dangers of posting personal information are great because the information and pictures become public information. Information and pictures can be used as evidence in disciplinary situations as well. There have been numerous “horror stories” of students being stalked and mugged as well as pages being copied and sent to schools, media, ect. Future employers are also now surfing the sites investigating future hires.

Hazing/Initiations

Hazing is prohibited. Hazing is defined as any action or situation that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation, admission into, or affiliation with a team under the sanction of the College. Such behavior is prohibited and violations will be dealt with severely including loss of participation.

Student-Athlete Advisory Board

Each athletic team at Aquinas College, will be represented by a team member to serve on the Student-Athlete Advisory Board. The Student-Athlete Advisory Board members will be chosen by each coach. This group of individuals will be involved in several activities throughout the year including: promotion of events, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, community volunteer opportunities, educational forums, and other activities the group wishes to explore.

KEY ISSUES:

Academic Policy

Aquinas College students are responsible for knowing and abiding by all rules and regulations as outlined in the Aquinas College Student Conduct Code.



Attendance Policy

Responsibility for class attendance rests with the individual student, and since regular and punctual attendance is expected, the student accepts the consequences of failure to attend. Student-athletes will be given game schedules well in advance and are urged to avoid conflicts when scheduling classes if at all possible. Quad classes can never be missed. Student-athletes should never request class absences because of practice, scrimmages, picture days, etc. If there is a conflict because of a game day and a class, it is up to the student-athlete to:

- a. Inform the professor of this well in advance.
- b. Try to work out an alternative if possible.
- c. Make a decision in regard to the game and/or class.

All faculty members are sent a roster and a schedule of games. The purpose of this is to inform professors as to who is participating and when the contests take place. There are very few rescheduled events except in the spring when the weather can cause problems. Ultimately, it is the professor's responsibility to make the decision if a class conflict arises.

Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco and Smokeless Tobacco

Policies regarding alcohol, drugs and smoking are defined in the Aquinas College Student Conduct Code. In addition, in compliance with NAIA guidelines, the use of smokeless tobacco is prohibited by all student-athletes during practices and games. Each coach may have specific rules governing that team and these must be followed.

Eligibility

All student-athletes must meet minimum academic, athletic and conduct standards in order to be eligible to participate on any intercollegiate team at Aquinas College. The following is a checklist for you to follow to insure your eligibility to participate in intercollegiate sports. If you have any questions, please see the Faculty Athletic Representative or the Athletic Director immediately. Don't wait with any questions.

Incoming Freshmen

1. An entering freshman student must be a graduate of an accredited high school or be accepted as a regular student in good standing as defined by the enrolling institution.
2. An entering freshman student must meet two of the three entry level requirements:
 - a. A minimum score of 18 on the ACT or 860 on the SAT.
 - b. An overall high school grade point average of 2.9 or higher on a 4.0 scale.
 - c. Graduate in the upper half of the student's high school graduating class



Transfer Students

If you are a transfer student from another college, see the athletic director with all previous college transcripts immediately. Transfer rules are very detailed.

Enrollment

In order to participate, you must be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credit hours during your season to participate. Don't ever drop below 12 credits during your season. Don't drop classes without consulting your coach, counselor or athletic director.

Terms of Attendance

You must use your athletic eligibility (4 seasons of competition per sport) within your first 10 semesters of full time enrollment. Enrollment in 9 credits or more is considered a full time semester for national eligibility rules.

Summer Attendance

You may use summer school hours to bolster your eligibility. Summer school attendance does NOT count towards your 10 semesters of enrollment. Hours passed are added to your previous full time semester hours.

24 Credit Rule

You must have accumulated a minimum of 24 credit hours during your last two semesters of enrollment (full time) to be eligible. Freshman must complete 9 hours in order to compete during the 2nd semester of the freshman year.

Normal Progress Rule

Normal progress rule is you will need 24 completed credit hours to compete in your 2nd season of competition; 48 completed credit hours to compete in your 3rd season of competition; 72 completed credit hours to compete in your 4th season of competition. GPA rule is 2.0 after the first year (Aquinas rule).

Repeat Classes

If you have passed a class, but wish to take the same class over (repeat) to obtain a better grade this class can't be used for either the 12/24 credit rule.

Credit for Participation



Each student-athlete is allowed to earn 2 credit hours for athletic participation (HE 143 and HE 144). These are pass/fail credits. You must register for these credits or add through an add slip procedure.

Guidelines for participation in scrimmages/contests

Before a student-athlete can participate in any scrimmage, or event against any outside competition a student-athlete must:

1. Sign the eligibility clearance form
2. Complete the Aquinas College eligibility information sheet.
3. Have all transcripts on file for eligibility check.
4. Be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credit hours.
5. If a transfer student, the NAIA transfer form must be completed with the faculty representative.
6. Completed a physical examination.
7. Have all insurance information on file.

Athletic Trainer's Guidelines

Physical Exams

All incoming freshman and transfer students will be required to have proof of a physical examination on file at the Aquinas College Health Center prior to the start of classes in the fall. In addition, all freshman and transfer students will be required to have an athletic physical exam given by our team physician. After the initial athletic exam, student-athletes will have a follow-up exam each year. This service will be provided on campus free of charge. Student-athletes are required to have a physical exam and health history form on file with the athletic trainer.

Insurance

All student-athletes are required to have primary health insurance coverage in order to compete on an Aquinas College athletic team. Students should notify the athletic training staff if there is a change in their insurance policy.



Training room treatment and rehabilitation

Student-athletes must communicate to the athletic training staff any injuries that may need attention. It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to report for treatment and rehabilitation sessions as scheduled. (Emergency situations will be dealt with on individual situations)

Saints Club

The Saints Club – our all-inclusive boosters’ club was created to support Aquinas College’s athletic programs and our student-athletes. We are extremely proud of our programs and the traditions that have been formed through the years. Each year we continue to build on the past with the enthusiasm and efforts of our current student-athletes. As we look to the future, our vision includes improvement and enhancement of our facilities, our programs, and the experiences of our student-athletes.

Athletic Financial Aid

1. All awards are one-year renewable at the discretion of the coach.
2. If an athlete becomes ineligible to participate for academic reasons, the award will be maintained for that year. However, renewal for the following year will not be made unless the student is recommended for renewal by the coach and the student meets eligibility.
3. An athlete who does not fulfill his/her obligation to a sport for reasons other than sickness, injury, or being dropped from a team through the initiative of a coach may have to refund a portion of the athletic award to the scholarship fund.
4. If a student withdraws from the College, the award will be prorated according to the College’s refund policy.
5. The student must maintain full-time enrollment status (minimum of 12 hours per semester).
6. If the student is eligible for other need-based assistance, he/she will be notified by the financial aid office. Eligibility for need-based financial aid is based on information the student provides on a confidential financial aid application.
7. Financial aid awards may be revised if any information was provided incorrectly or the student changes his or her status (applies only if student is receiving other need-based assistance).

Suspensions

If a student-athlete fails to adhere to guidelines established by Aquinas College, the WHAC conference, or specific team rules, suspensions may take place.



Student-Athlete Appeal Procedure

The appeals process procedure is formulated for the student-athlete who feels that he/she has been unjustly dealt with in a sport in which he/she is participating. The following steps have been established to deal with such circumstances.

- Step 1: The student-athlete will meet with the specific head coach involved to discuss the situation. There will always be a third party (assistant coach or an athletic administrator) present to listen and moderate, if necessary, the situation. If the student-athlete feels that the results of this meeting have not remedied the problem, he/she may proceed to step 2.
- Step 2: The student-athlete will meet with the Athletic Director or Assistant Athletic Director for women to discuss the situation. The concerns of the student-athlete should be presented in writing. If the student-athlete feels that the results of this meeting have not clarified or remedied the situation, he/she may proceed to step 3.
- Step 3: The student-athlete at this point should put his/her grievance in writing for distribution to the respective coach, the athletic director, and the chairman of the Athletic Committee. He/she should then request a hearing with the Athletic Appeals Board.

Appeals Board

The Appeals Board shall be comprised of three individuals: a neutral coach; two Athletic Committee members, one of which will be a faculty member and the other a student representative. The Chairman of the Athletic Committee will preside over this meeting; he/she is a non-voting member in such cases. A report of the minutes from the hearing shall be filed with the Athletic Director. Recommendations of the hearing will be reported at the following Athletic Committee meeting. The Athletic Committee then makes the final decision.