

# athletic scholarships



2007–08 NCAA  
Champions:  
The University of  
Arizona wins their  
first national title in  
women's swimming.  
Photographed by: AP

## EDUCATIONUSA ADVISES INTERNATIONAL STUDENT-ATHLETES

THERE ARE OVER **380,000** STUDENT-ATHLETES IN THE UNITED STATES. OVER ONE THOUSAND U.S. COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES OFFER OPPORTUNITIES FOR TALENTED STUDENTS TO PLAY FOR THE COLLEGE TEAM AS A MEANS OF PAYING FOR THEIR EDUCATION. *ARE YOU READY TO COMPETE?*

*"There is no better way to earn a degree in whatever field you please, than by doing what you love most — in my case it is running and jumping over hurdles."*

*TRACK athlete from South Africa, studying at a community college*

### QUESTION: WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

- 1 Start early.** The application process is competitive and requires careful planning. Start your research approximately 18 to 24 months prior to your anticipated date of attendance at a university in the United States.  
**TIP: Use the do-it-yourself promotion websites at the end of this guide to help you assess your level of athletic skill. EducationUSA advisers can help student-athletes 'find the right fit'.**
- 2 Graduate from secondary school — "high school".** Find your country in the [Academic Guide for International Student-Athletes](#) and review the graduation requirements and minimum grade point average (GPA) applicable to you.
- 3 Find a school:**
  - a** See the National Collegiate Athletic Association ([NCAA](#)) [Sport Listing](#) to find participating U.S. institutions. Division I schools are highly competitive and have the most scholarships available.  
**Explore these options:**
    - Athletic scholarships are offered in most sponsored sports at the majority of NCAA Division II institutions (see link above);
    - Over 350 small college athletics programs in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics ([NAIA](#)) also offer financial support for student-athletes;
    - Some of the 510 junior colleges in the National Junior College Athletic Association ([NJCAA](#)) offer support for student-athletes.
  - b** [Find a school](#): Consider your academic and athletic goals.
  - c** Ask your coach or other student-athletes for recommendations and contacts.
- 4 Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center** (or see the resource section below for NAIA and NJCAA institutions and certification). Fill out the "[Student Release Form](#)" for international students. For most international students, your certification status will be evaluated after your final academic records are completed and forwarded to the eligibility center. The cost to register is \$85.
  - a** It is critically important to fulfill the NCAA's secondary school "core courses" requirement.
  - b** **Deadline:** There are no deadlines to register. However, students must be certified before receiving an athletics scholarship or practicing/competing with an NCAA Division I or II school.

"JOIN THE LARGEST ONLINE NETWORK CONNECTING SECONDARY SCHOOL ATHLETES AND COLLEGE COACHES!"

Register for free to:

- Create a profile to market your ability to college coaches
- Research athletic scholarships and college academic standards

[www.berecruited.com](http://www.berecruited.com)\*



**TIP: Search by academics and sports. Search broadly before adding additional points of interest to you.**



\* External links to other Internet sites should not be construed as an endorsement of the views or privacy policies contained therein.

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**TIP:** Include a reference from a current or former coach in your correspondence with university coaches.

## KEEP IN MIND:

### NCAA Division I and II

- Students must register with the NCAA Eligibility Center
- Athletic scholarships may be available
- Scholarships may cover all or part of the cost of tuition and living costs for attending a U.S. college/university

### NCAA Division III

- Each institution sets its own standards
- Athletic talent can attract other forms of scholarships & financial aid

## OTHER OPPORTUNITIES:

The National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) has their "Eligibility Affidavit" and "Amateurism Questionnaire" available online as well.

- 5 Take the SAT or ACT** (required for NCAA certification; may be required by NAIA member institutions depending on your secondary school grade point average and if you graduated in the top half of your school).
  - a NCAA Division I: Please see the [Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete](#) and minimum test score requirements.
  - b NCAA Division II: A minimum 820 combined score on the SAT verbal and math sections, or a minimum sum score of 68 on the ACT is required.
  - c When taking the ACT or SAT, send your test scores to the eligibility center (the code is "9999").In addition, most international students will be required to take an English language proficiency exam such as [TOEFL](#) or [IELTS](#) during the college/university application process.
- 6 Draft a sports CV that includes your accomplishments within your sport.**
  - a How to create a sports resume for specific coaches: The CV should be 1-2 pages and to the point, preferably in bullet point format, providing information about your achievements and goals. Include contact information, graduation date, intended major, and a few details such as SAT/ACT scores (or projected testing dates), current GPA, and class ranking/size.
  - b See the resource links below for do-it-yourself promotion.
- 7 Write a cover letter to the head coach at each institution that explains both your academic and athletic abilities** (this is where the sport CV comes in as an easy reference tool for athletic accomplishments).
- 8 Apply to as many U.S. colleges or universities as possible.** Any questions about your application? See "Getting Started" or contact [EducationUSA](#).
- 9 Good luck!** College athletics can be one of the most rewarding and unique experiences in U.S. campus life.
- 10 Contact your EducationUSA adviser with questions.**

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

### WHAT IS THE NCAA?

The [NCAA](#), or National Collegiate Athletic Association, was established in 1906 and serves as the athletics governing body for more than 1,280 U.S. colleges, universities, conferences and organizations.

### WHAT IS "ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION"?

Any prospective student-athlete who will enroll in college and plans to compete in NCAA Division I or Division II athletics must register with the eligibility center. The NCAA Eligibility Center will certify the academic and amateur credentials of all college-bound student-athletes who wish to compete in NCAA Division I or II athletics. Keep in mind that the eligibility center is not a placement agency and it does not guarantee admission to universities.

### The NCAA Eligibility Center requires:

- online application for [international student-athletes](#);
- score(s) from either the ACT or SAT standardized tests, reported directly to the eligibility center by entering the code "9999" after your test;

*Much of the social life at NCAA Division I schools, such as Penn State, revolves around athletic competitions.*



- \$85 nonrefundable payment by credit card.
- After online registration, mail certified copies of academic records and transcripts, proof of graduation and official translations to the address below.

### Eligibility Center customer service:

Representatives are available from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.,  
U.S. Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday.  
International callers: [+1 317-223-0700](tel:+13172230700).

*Mailing Address: NCAA Eligibility Center  
P.O. Box 7136 / Indianapolis, IN 46207  
[www.ncaaclearinghouse.net](http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net)*



## ONLINE RESOURCES FOR RESEARCHING COLLEGIATE ATHLETICS IN THE U.S.

- **National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)**
  - Includes the informative "Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete".  
[www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org)
  - [International Students – Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- **Summary of recruiting rules for each sport**
- **National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA)**
  - Includes 510 junior colleges, some of which offer financial support for student-athletes. Search for the "[NJCAA Eligibility Rules Pamphlet](#)".  
[www.njcaa.org](http://www.njcaa.org)
- **National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA)**
  - Includes 350 small college athletics programs, most of which offer financial support for student-athletes. Search for "[A Guide for the College-Bound Athlete](#)".  
[www.naia.org](http://www.naia.org)
- **Find a school offering your sport:**  
[Peterson's College Search](#) or [The NCAA Sport Listing](#).

### FOR DO-IT-YOURSELF PROMOTION:

[www.berecruited.com](http://www.berecruited.com)  
[www.prepchamps.com](http://www.prepchamps.com)  
[www.trupreps.com](http://www.trupreps.com)  
[www.activerecruiting.com](http://www.activerecruiting.com)  
[www.collegecoaches.net](http://www.collegecoaches.net)  
[www.sportsworx.com](http://www.sportsworx.com)

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EducationUSA advisers in 170 countries provide accurate, unbiased information about all accredited U.S. higher education institutions. Find your EducationUSA center at: [www.educationUSA.state.gov/centers](http://www.educationUSA.state.gov/centers). Excerpts from this handout were originally published in EducationUSA Connections (September, 2008).



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