



**Spring 2021
Student-Athlete Eligibility and Compliance Q&A
February 18, 2021**

In light of the Ivy League Council of Presidents February 18th announcement regarding the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on opportunities for intercollegiate athletic competition in spring sports in 2021, the Ivy League staff has compiled this document to help student-athletes, institutional coaches and administrators answer questions that may arise. This document will be updated as additional questions or issues arise and as additional guidance is received from NCAA staff. Any new questions or additions will be highlighted in future iterations of this document.

Note: This document is intended to answer questions pertaining to Ivy League and NCAA policy in light of this decision. Institutional rules and/or policies may be more restrictive than the rules and regulations referenced or described below.

General Questions

Q: What sports are classified as spring sports for the purposes of this announcement?

A: Archery, Baseball, Equestrian, Golf, Lacrosse, Rowing, Rugby*, Sailing, Softball, Tennis, Track & Field – Outdoor, Volleyball (M)*, Water Polo (W)*

Note: Equestrian and Rugby are not designated as spring sports by the NCAA. As such, any notes below about NCAA season of competition or clock extension waivers are not applicable to these sports as they were covered by previous NCAA blanket waivers.

(*) – Please note additional competition restrictions outlined on Page 3 for these sports.

Seasons of Competition/Eligibility – Ivy League/NCAA Rules

Q: Will spring sport student-athletes who participate in intercollegiate athletics competition in 2020-21 use an Ivy League and/or NCAA season of competition?

A: The Ivy League will provide a blanket Ivy League non-participation waiver for all spring sport student-athletes for the 2020-21 academic year, regardless of whether or not their team is able to participate in local competition.

As of February 18th, the NCAA has not granted blanket season of competition or clock extension waivers for spring sport student-athletes in 2021. Understanding that competition, if possible, will be greatly limited this spring, the Ivy League is working with NCAA staff to explore the possibility of a blanket waiver for Ivy League spring sport

student-athletes who wish to participate in competition. It is our intent to have a clear answer for student-athletes well ahead of any planned athletics competition.

Q: If a student wishes to train with their team, but elects not to participate in competition, will they use a season of competition?

A: In this scenario, the student would not use an NCAA season of competition and would be able to take advantage of the blanket Ivy League non-participation waiver applied to all spring sport student-athletes.

Q: Will spring sport student-athletes who qualify for the blanket non-participation waiver automatically be eligible for a 5th year at their institution?

A: No. Established Ivy League 5th year waiver policies will continue to apply. Student enrollment patterns must be approved by the institution's academic authorities.

Q: If a student-athlete has eligibility remaining for a 5th year and is approved to use that season at their current institution, may they complete their undergraduate degree and pursue graduate work while competing in their 5th year?

A: Normally, intercollegiate athletics participation in the Ivy League shall be limited to those enrolled as undergraduates.

In light of the pandemic's impact on athletics competition across the entire 2020-21 academic year, the Ivy League Council of Presidents recently approved a waiver permitting specific and limited exceptions to this rule for 2021-22 only. Current senior student-athletes may consult their institutional athletics compliance office to explore their eligibility for this waiver.

Athletics Participation – Playing and Practice Seasons – Bylaw 17

Q: What type of athletics activity is permitted for spring sports for the remainder of this academic year?

A: In January 2021, the Ivy League updated the phased athletics activity plan for the winter/spring term. This updated plan starts with a virtual Phase 0 before building through four phases and eventually culminating in the ability to participate in limited outdoor competition. Progression from one phase to the next will be approved by local campus authorities and will vary from campus to campus, and in some cases from program to program at an institution.

- Phase Zero: Campus Arrival/Virtual Team Activities – no in-person meetings or training

- Phase I: Socially Distant, Small Group Activities – socially distant (6+ feet) small group conditioning, weight training, and sport-specific activity
- Phase II: Mid-size Group and Additional Activities, With Restrictions – Practice activities may include on-field play and/or strength and conditioning activities, though limited or subject to some remaining restrictions; contact, close drills, and intra-squad scrimmaging may take place as permitted by campus policies.
- Phase III: Practice – sport-specific practice activity is permitted by campus policies and is no longer subject to social distancing or group size restrictions
- Phase IV: Practice and Competition – institutions have modified or relaxed restrictions on travel and/or visitors to campus for comparable activities and student-athletes are now permitted to participate in intercollegiate athletics competition

Q: What are the daily and weekly hour limitations for spring teams as they move through the phased athletics activity plan?

A: Teams in their declared playing and practice season may participate in a maximum of 12 hours per week of in-person, physical athletics activity. In addition, teams may participate in up to 8 hours of countable team meetings.

Subject to local approval, spring teams will be permitted to use any of the allowed 20 hours for physical activity beginning three weeks prior to the date on which competition is approved to begin.

Q: If my campus advances to Phase IV, what type of competition will I be permitted to engage in?

A: Institutions are permitted to schedule limited, outdoor, local non-conference competition subject to a series of stipulations agreed to by the Council of Presidents. The exact nature and timing of such competition is subject to approval by local campus authorities and must be consistent with what is permitted for other similar co-curricular activities on that campus.

Q: Will sports like tennis, that are intended to be played outdoors but sometimes are conducted indoors due to weather, be permitted to participate in competition?

A: Yes, but only if such competition occurs outdoors.

Q: Are any spring sports excluded from the opportunity to participate in competition this term?

A: Indoor sports (Men's Volleyball, Women's Water Polo) and sports categorized by the NCAA as high risk for the transmission of COVID-19 (Women's Rugby) will not be permitted to engage in intercollegiate athletics competition in Spring 2021. These sports

may continue to participate in practice activities on their respective campuses, as permitted by local policy.

Outside Athletics Competition

Q: May currently enrolled spring sport student-athletes participate in outside competition during the academic year?

A: With few exceptions, student-athletes in team sports [Baseball, Lacrosse, Rowing, Rugby, Sailing, Softball, Volleyball (M), and Water Polo (W)] may not normally participate as a member of a team in outside competition during the academic year.

For the 2020-21 academic year, the NCAA approved an exception for any students on teams that have canceled their season and will not participate in competition. This exception currently applies to all Women's Rugby, Women's Water Polo, and Men's Volleyball student-athletes and members of any other individual teams that declare they will not participate in intercollegiate athletics competition this year.

As always, please consult your athletics compliance office before participating in any outside competition, team or individual, to ensure that such activity will not negatively impact your eligibility.