Guidelines for Student-Athletes Regarding Class Attendance

Westminster College is committed to the philosophy that intercollegiate athletics is an important part of the Institution’s mission to provide diverse educational opportunities to our students. Just as we expect sportsmanship “on the field” we also expect that you are a professional, mature individual with regard to the primary reason you are here—your studies. The College recognizes that there may be occasions when, due to a scheduled contest, you may have to miss a class. Unfortunately, Westminster doesn’t currently have an official policy about missing classes. It is our hope that faculty will work to the best of their ability (within reason) with students participating in college-sponsored activities, which includes athletic competitions. To help this process run smoother for your professors and yourself, we recommend you do the following steps.

Many conflicts can be avoided during the class scheduling process.

As part of the scheduling process for each semester:

- Approach your coach to obtain the latest information on the proposed contest and practice schedule for your team for the semester you will be scheduling. While all dates/times may not be final, the more information you have, the better. Remember, you may not miss class for practice, or for competitions during the non-championship season.

- Schedule an appointment with your academic advisor. Inform your advisor that you are a student-athlete, emphasizing the fact that you are a student first. Provide her/him with as much information as possible about your schedule of contests so that you may design an appropriate plan of study.

- If you have a faculty advisor, inform them that you are also working on your class schedule with Susan Heath in Athletics in order to remain eligible for competition. Let them know this is because of NCAA rules ensuring a student’s progress toward degree, and encourage them to contact Susan or Chris Cline if they have any questions or concerns.

- While not always easy or sometimes even possible, schedule classes that don’t result in significant conflicts.

Once classes start:

- Read the syllabus carefully, and make sure you understand the course policies.

- As soon as they are available, obtain two (2) copies of the Faculty Notification Letter for each class you are taking that semester. Clearly write your name on the front of both forms. Highlight your name on the form you will give to your professor, as well as any competition dates that will directly affect your class attendance for each course.

- As soon as possible after obtaining the Faculty Notification Letters, meet with each of your professors that teaches a course in which you may have a conflict during the semester. Since faculty members are often preoccupied before and after class, it is best to schedule an appointment with them for during their office hours. This also helps send the message that you are serious about your education.
**When you meet with your professor:**

- Be professional. Show up on time for your appointment and be prepared. Bring both copies of the Faculty Notification Letter, and provide each professor with the highlighted copy.
- Discuss with your professor her/his preferred method for you to complete work that you will miss during the semester. Come to your meeting with a plan, and offer to make up work ahead of any misses you will have.
- Discuss a plan to update your professors of any misses you may have or schedule changes that may occur during the semester. There is no way that each of your professors can keep track of the detailed schedules of every student-athlete in their classes, so you will need to develop a regular line of communication. Come to an agreement on the best method to stay in touch as the semester progresses.
- Indicate to your professor that you will be adding his/her office phone number and e-mail to your cell phone so that you will be able to leave a message in case of an unanticipated situation that will affect your ability to attend class (e.g., bus breaks down, etc.).
- Ask your professor to sign your copy of the Faculty Notification Letter. Give this copy to your coach, Susan Heath, or Chris Cline.

**During the semester:**

- ALWAYS, ALWAYS, ALWAYS remind your professors of an upcoming miss well ahead of the absence. You may not be permitted to make up work if you do not do this.
- DO NOT MISS CLASS FOR OTHER REASONS—BE IN CLASS, ON TIME, EVERY DAY.

**You have to be better than the average student:**

- Better about communicating
- Better engaged in class
- Better ethical and behavioral conduct, in and out of class
- Better campus citizen

**It might not seem fair, but you represent Westminster College, and it is a privilege to be on an athletic team.**

**Contacts/Resources:**

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