

MTSU Compliance - Amateurism

Amateurism

Only an amateur student-athlete is eligible for intercollegiate athletic participation in a particular sport (NCAA Bylaw 12.01.1).

An individual loses amateur status and shall not be eligible for intercollegiate competition in a particular sport if the individual (NCAA Bylaw 12.1.1):

- Uses his or her athletics skill (directly or indirectly) for pay in any form in that sport
- Accepts a promise of pay even if such pay is to be received following completion of intercollegiate athletics participation
- Signs a contract or commitment of any kind to play professional athletics, regardless of its legal enforceability or any consideration received
- Receives, directly or indirectly, a salary, reimbursement of expenses or any other form of financial assistance from a professional sports organization based upon athletics skill or participation, except as permitted by NCAA regulations
- Competes on any professional athletics team and knows (or had reason to know) that the team is a professional athletics team (per NCAA Bylaw 12.02.5), even if no pay or remuneration for expenses was received
- Enters into a professional draft or an agreement with an agent or other entity to negotiate a professional contract (NCAA Bylaw 12.2.4.2.1 for exception related to professional basketball draft)

Prohibited Forms of Pay

"Pay" as used above includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Salary, Gratuity or Compensation. Any direct or indirect salary, gratuity or comparable compensation.
- Division or Split of Surplus. Any division or split of surplus (bonuses, game receipts, etc.)
- Educational Expenses not received from parents or legal guardians, unless otherwise permitted by NCAA regulations.
- Educational expenses from an outside sports team or organization that are based in any degree upon the recipient's athletics ability even if funds are given to the institution to administer to the recipient.
- Excessive or improper expenses, awards and benefits.
- Cash or the equivalent thereof (e.g., trust fund) as an award for participation in competition at any time, even if such award is permitted under rules governing an amateur, noncollegiate event in which the individual is competing.
- Expense incurred or awards received by an individual that are prohibited by the rules governing an amateur, noncollegiate event in which the individual is competing.
- Expenses received from an outside amateur sports team or organization in excess of actual and necessary travel, room and board expenses, apparel and equipment for competition and practice held in preparation for such competition.
- Payment to individual team members for unspecified or unitemized expenses beyond actual and necessary travel, room and board expenses for practice and competition.
- Actual and necessary expenses or other form of compensation to participate in athletics competition (while not representing an educational institution) from a sponsor other than an individual upon whom the athlete is naturally or legally dependent or the nonprofessional organization that is sponsoring the competition.
- Any payment, including actual and necessary expenses, conditioned on the individual's or team's place finish or performance or given on an incentive basis, or receipt of expenses in excess of the same reasonable amount for permissible expenses given to all participants involved in the competition.

- Preferential treatment, benefits or services because of the individual's athletics reputation or skill or pay-back potential as a professional athlete, unless such treatments, benefits or services are permitted under NCAA regulations.
- Participation for pay in competition that involves the use of overall athletics skill (e.g., "superstars" competition) constitutes a violation of NCAA amateur status and would render the individual ineligible for intercollegiate competition in all sports (NCAA Bylaw 12.1.1.1).
- A student who accepts pay in any form for participation in "road racing" is ineligible for intercollegiate competition in cross country or track.

Professional in Another Sport

A professional athlete in one sport may represent a member institution in a different sport. However, the student-athlete cannot receive institutional financial aid in the second sport unless the student-athlete (NCAA Bylaw 12.1.4):

- Is no longer involved in professional athletics
- Is not receiving any remuneration from a professional sports organization
- Has no active contractual relationship with any professional athletics team