

Ridgewater College

Student-Athlete Handbook and the Policies and Procedures Manual of the Athletic Department.

PHILOSOPHY

Membership on an athletic team at Ridgewater College is considered a privilege. In order to maintain that membership, student-athletes are expected to demonstrate good sportsmanship, honesty, integrity, and respect for others. Student-athletes must also abide by all college policies, team rules, the rules and policies of the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA), the Minnesota College Athletic Conference (MCAC), and state and federal laws.

As representatives of the college, student-athletes are among the most visible students on campus and in the community. As such, they serve as role models, mentors and spokespeople. The college, the athletic program, and the student-athlete all benefit from this relationship. However, this relationship brings with it a unique set of responsibilities. Personal action of student-athletes, both on and off campus, becomes public knowledge.

To this end, the Ridgewater College Athletic Department has adopted a standard of ethical conduct and behavioral expectations for all athletes at Ridgewater College. We believe that a balanced student-athlete will not only perform athletically, but will also achieve academically and be a responsible citizen. Violating this code of conduct would be considered significant and calls for disciplinary action. If any of the policies or expectations outlined in this handbook are not followed, serious disciplinary action will be taken. Appropriate disciplinary action may include progressive discipline such as a verbal warning, ineligibility to practice, ineligibility to start in contests, sitting out games, suspension and/or continued suspension from the team, and dismissal from competition or the team. Each individual situation is unique and will be dealt with accordingly.

RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP

One of the primary purposes of a post-secondary institution is to educate young men and women to be responsible and productive citizens of good character. Good character is knowing what is right (awareness), committing to what is right (attitude) and doing what is right (behavior). Good character is knowing of, caring about and acting upon the core ethical values of respect and responsibility for oneself and others, plus important derivative values such as fairness, honesty, trust, decency, and compassion. It means having personal integrity and possessing the will, the courage, the determination, and the persistence to do the right thing despite pressures and temptations to the contrary. The Athletic Department firmly believes that good character is necessary for athletic excellence. Accordingly, student-athletes are expected to:

- Abide by all government laws, college regulations, and Athletic Department rules
- Accept personal responsibility to exercise good judgment and self-discipline on and off the playing field/court and on and off campus
- Take seriously the duty of being a good role model, including prudent personal associations, and of exerting a positive influence on others -- especially young people

- Honorably represent oneself, one's team, and the college by exhibiting pride in dress and behavior while playing in and traveling to and from sports events
- Present a positive demeanor at all times on and off the campus
- Show respect for all members of the college and the community
- Treat people with civility and cooperate with people in authority
- Refrain from and be intolerant of physical abuse, harassment and intimidation
- Demonstrate responsible citizenship and good sportsmanship

The college is proud of its well-earned reputation as a high quality regional institution of higher education and is resolute about protecting its integrity. Student-athletes will be held accountable for conduct that is detrimental to the college and the Athletic Department. This means that one shall not embarrass, disgrace or discredit Ridgewater College, and there are serious consequences for anyone engaging in negative behavior.

ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITIES

In keeping with the mission of the college, a priority for the Athletic Department is to augment and support every effort that will foster intellectual development and graduation for student-athletes. While several levels of support exist at the college, the ultimate responsibility for success rests upon the shoulders of the student-athlete. As a result, each student-athlete is expected to:

- Set a primary goal of obtaining a degree
- Seek assistance from instructors, advisors, counselors and/or Academic Support Services before and/or when academic difficulties occur
- Be a responsible member of each class, which includes attending, being prepared, completing requirements, and participating at the level expected of all students
- Meet with the academic major advisor and academic services staff as required
- Adhere to the colleges policies regarding academic integrity and honesty

As athletic ambassadors of the college, student-athletes are expected to:

- Behave with dignity, respect and good sportsmanship
- Conduct themselves with honesty and good sportsmanship during games and competition
- Reflect the high standards of honor and dignity that should characterize participation in competitive intercollegiate athletics

- Conduct themselves in a manner reflecting positively on themselves and on the reputation of the college, both on and off the "field of play," in pre-game and post-game comments to media, and when traveling and participating at other institutions
- Maintain an attitude of respect toward opponents
- Look for ways to encourage and appreciate quality play and effort, regardless of whether it's exhibited by a teammate or an opponent

As members of an athletic team representing Ridgewater College, student-athletes are expected to:

- Adhere to applicable NJCAA and MCAC rules and policies.
- Adhere to all team and college rules and policies governing student-athlete conduct and behavior
- Comply with individual sport team rules, as established by the Head Coach and/or Athletic Department
- Adhere to their particular team's dress code, nutritional needs, and curfew

While intense and emotional game action and conduct is certainly a part of intercollegiate sports contests, a student-athlete should never demean the dignity and individuality of the opponent. To this end, student-athletes are expressly prohibited from engaging in the following behavior at any intercollegiate sporting events:

- Inappropriate behavior with the intent to demean opponents, game officials and fans
- Disrespectful attitude toward opponents, game officials or fans
- Inciting crowd hostility
- Vulgar language and/or gestures

HEALTH AND MEDICAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Participation in athletics is contingent upon medical approval by medical doctor. Student-athletes are required to show evidence of proper medical insurance and provide a current medical history to their coaches. Participation in all department-sponsored student enhancement seminars or functions, which may include but are not limited to; counseling, drug testing, drug education, nutrition and alcohol education is required. Student-athletes are expected to keep themselves in top physical condition and are responsible for continuing training programs prescribed by medical and coaching staffs.

Alcohol consumption is highly discouraged. Minnesota state law sets the minimum age for the purchase and drinking of alcoholic beverages at 21 years of age. Underage drinking is a violation of this code of conduct. Student-athletes are prohibited from drinking alcoholic beverages whenever appearing as official representatives of Ridgewater College for athletic competition (including travel time), community and public service events and appearances, and Department of Athletics-sponsored events (all sports contests, recognition banquets, speaking to youth groups, participating or presiding at camps/clinics, and any other event affiliated with the Athletic Department or the college).

The use of illegal and/or "performance enhancing" drugs is inconsistent with the purpose of intercollegiate athletics and creates a danger to the health and safety of student-athletes and their teammates. The Athletic Department will not tolerate the use of these products.

COMPLIANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

Student-athletes must participate in all mandatory educational programs, and assist the Department of Athletics administration by providing information regarding certification of eligibility and NJCAA compliance issues whenever sought.

- Student-athletes should be aware that they are prohibited under NJCAA rules from receiving extra benefits
- Student athletes are responsible for notifying the Athletic Director if they know of, or suspect, the violation of NCAA rules by self, a teammate, coach, a member of the athletic staff, or any other person

Violations of these, and any other applicable NJCAA or MCAC rules will be considered violations of the code of conduct.

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING VIOLATIONS OF THE STUDENT-ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT

Allegations of violation of the code of conduct may come from several sources. In those cases involving NJCAA, MCAC or Ridgewater College rules, college personnel or legal authorities, the Head Coach and Athletic Director must be notified. The Head Coach is responsible for reviewing code of conduct violation allegations and determining if a violation occurred. If a serious violation did occur, a report must be filed with the Athletic Director. This report will list the pertinent facts, the action taken or penalties recommended by the Head Coach.

The Head Coach, subject to review and approval of the Athletics Director, may bar a student-athlete from participating in team activities for a prescribed period of time for violations of the student-athlete code of conduct. This sanction shall be imposed as soon as the Head Coach notifies the student-athlete of the violation, gives the student-athlete a chance to explain what happened, and determines that a sanction is justified after consideration of the student-athlete's statement. The level of progressive discipline is at the discretion of the head coach. Disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to: a warning, ineligibility to practice, ineligibility to start in contests, sitting out games, suspension and/or continued suspension from the team, permanent dismissal from the team. In addition, student-athletes may be required to participate in assistance programs to address behavioral problems.

The sanction for any violation shall be subject to the review and approval of the Athletic Director. Discipline imposed by the Athletic Director does not preclude any disciplinary action which may be imposed by the Dean of Student Services under Ridgewater's student code of conduct.

In cases involving NJCAA violations, the Athletic Director is responsible for the investigation and submission of findings. Once it has been determined that a violation has occurred, the student-athlete may be suspended from competition and/or team activities pending review and resolution. Penalties will be issued by the Athletic Director and may include: a warning, ineligibility to practice, ineligibility to start in contests, sitting out games, suspension and/or continued suspension from the team, or permanent dismissal from the team.

Any violation of the Athletic Department's code of conduct which results in permanent dismissal from an athletic team shall be promptly reviewed by the Athletic Director. Upon request by the student-athlete, the Athletic Director will arrange a meeting with the athlete to examine the nature of the violation and the subsequent dismissal from the team.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH CRIMINAL VIOLATIONS OF LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL LAWS

Student athletes are required to report all violations of the law to their Head Coach and Athletic Director. Violations at this level are reported to the Dean of Student Services for investigation and any appropriate discipline under Ridgewater's student code of conduct. All sanctions will be commensurate with the severity of the violation as determined by the Head Coach and the Athletic Director. In addition, student-athletes may be required to participate in assistance programs to address behavioral problems.

- Charge of Misdemeanor - If charged with a misdemeanor, a student-athlete may be suspended from athletic participation by the Head Coach or the Athletic Director. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken which may include such progressive discipline as a verbal warning, ineligibility to practice, ineligibility to start in contests, sitting out games, and suspension and/or continued suspension from the team, and dismissal from competition or the team.
- Conviction of Misdemeanor - Once a student-athlete has been convicted of a misdemeanor, the student-athlete may be suspended from his or her team until the Head Coach and Athletic Director determines what additional disciplinary action may be taken. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken which may include such progressive discipline as a verbal warning, ineligibility to practice, ineligibility to start in contests, sitting out games, suspension and/or continued suspension from the team, and dismissal from competition or the team.
- Charge of Felon - If charged with a felony, a student-athlete will be automatically suspended from athletics participation by the Head Coach, pending the Athletic Director's investigation. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken which may include such progressive discipline as ineligibility to practice, ineligibility to start in contests, sitting out games, and suspension and/or continued suspension from the team, and dismissal from competition or the team.
- Conviction of Felony - If convicted of a felony, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken which may include such progressive discipline as ineligibility to practice, ineligibility to start in contests, sitting out games, and suspension and/or continued suspension from the team, and dismissal from competition or the team.
- Student-athletes are required to report all violations of law to their Head Coach and Athletic Director.

STUDENT-ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT

As representatives of the college, student-athletes are among the most visible students on campus and in the community. As such, they serve as role models, mentors and spokespeople. The college, the athletic program, and the student-athlete all benefit from this relationship. However, this relationship brings with it a unique set of responsibilities. Personal action of student-athletes, both on and off campus, becomes public knowledge

As a student who represents the College in intercollegiate athletic competition, I

- Understand that participation in intercollegiate athletics is a privilege, not a right awarded to me.
- Pledge to demonstrate responsible citizenship, sportsmanship, honesty, and integrity on the field or court, on the campus, in the local community, and to otherwise represent Ridgewater College in a manner that brings pride to me and the College.
- Will make the attainment of an academic degree a high priority.
- Will be a responsible member of each class, which includes attending, being prepared, completing requirements, treating everyone with respect and participating at the level expected of all students in the class.
- Will abide by the rules and policies of the NJCAA and the MCAC.
- Will abide by all college regulations and policies.
- Will abide by all sport-specific team rules (as issued by the Head Coach) , and the rules and policies of the Athletics Department governing student-athlete conduct, which are fully contained in the Student-Athlete handbook and the Policies and Procedures of the Athletics Department.
- Acknowledge that any violation of the Student-Athlete code of conduct or the Ridgewater College Student code of conduct, will result in appropriate discipline as determined by my Head Coach, the Athletic Director, Dean of Student Services, and/or code of conduct.

Student-Athlete Signature
or parent/guardian if student is under 18

Date

Print Student-Athlete Name
or parent/guardian if student is under 18

Sport