



2016 Division I Initial-Eligibility Standards Frequently-Asked Questions

Beginning August 1, 2016, college-bound student-athletes must meet a core-course progression requirement to be eligible to compete in the initial year of full-time enrollment at an NCAA Division I school. Specifically, college-bound student-athletes must complete 10 (of the required 16) core-course units – seven of which must be in English, math or natural/physical science – before the seventh semester of high school. In addition, these 10 core-course units must be used in the final academic certification (i.e., cannot be repeated for grade-point average purposes after the seventh semester begins) to determine whether college-bound student-athletes meet the sliding-scale index for competition (minimum 2.300 core-course grade-point average).

The following questions and answers are designed to assist the membership in applying the legislation.

ACADEMIC CERTIFICATION PROCESS

1. What are the primary changes to the NCAA Eligibility Center academic certification process for the class of 2016?

The main changes relate to how the core-course progression (10/7) requirement is implemented and presented visually to member institutions and college-bound student-athletes. Details regarding these changes are still in progress, but many key questions are addressed in the Division I Core-Course Progression (10/7) Requirement section below.

2. Will changes to the SAT in spring 2016 impact the academic certification process? It is not anticipated there will be an impact on the ability to use the new SAT in academic certifications for the class of 2016. NCAA national office staff is working closely with College Board to identify and better understand the concordance between the current SAT and the new SAT; however, data will not be available until spring 2016. [Click here to learn more about changes to the SAT](#)

3. How will 2015 graduates that delay enrollment to fall 2016 be certified?

Please refer to the Educational Column that addresses various scenarios. [Click here to learn more](#)



ACADEMIC CERTIFICATION PROCESS (cont.)

4. **If a college-bound student-athlete is a final nonqualifier, how will he/she's deficiency in meeting academic redshirt and/or qualifier standards be identified in the student's account?**
Deficiency descriptions will be provided through eligibility codes (similar to current process) and will be visible as they are today.

CORE-COURSE PROGRESSION (10/7) REQUIREMENT

6. **What is the core-course progression (10/7) requirement?**

In order to be eligible to compete during the initial year of full-time enrollment, a college-bound student-athlete must complete sixteen core courses. Ten of the sixteen core courses must be completed before the seventh semester (senior year) of high school and at least seven of these 10 core courses must be in English, math, or science. Grades achieved in such courses must be used in the college-bound student-athlete's academic certification and cannot be replaced by courses or grades achieved after starting the seventh semester.

*Note: the PSA must also meet the Division I sliding-scale index for competition (minimum 2.300 core-course GPA).

7. **Are international student-athletes (including Canada) required to meet the core-course progression (10/7) requirement?**

No, provided their final academic certification is based entirely on international credentials.

8. **Are international student-athletes whose entire academic certification is based solely on international academic credentials (e.g., category one or category two credentials) before completing an additional core-course unit(s) in a United States-curriculum based school or program post-graduation (i.e., plus one or plus three) required to meet the core-course progression (10/7) requirement?**

No. [Click here to learn more](#)

9. **Are split-file (international to United States, or United States to international) student-athletes required to meet the core-course progression (10/7) requirement?**

Yes.



CORE-COURSE PROGRESSION (10/7) REQUIREMENT (cont.)

- 10. How will a college-bound student-athlete's account designate whether or not he/she meets the core-course progression (10/7) requirement?**

This will be reflected in the NCAA Eligibility Center Member Institution Portal and in the student's NCAA Eligibility Center account.

- 11. How will core courses used to meet the core-course progression (10/7) requirement be identified in the student's account?**

Core courses used to meet the core-course progression (10/7) requirement will be visually distinguished in the Student Details Report in the student's NCAA Eligibility Center account.

- 12. How will the start of the seventh semester be determined for schools on a nontraditional calendar?**

The start of the seventh semester (or the equivalent) will be based on three calendar years from initial enrollment in grade nine. [Click here to learn more about determining the seventh semester of high school](#)

- 13. A college-bound student-athlete has two (or more) courses with the same grade. Why was Course 1 used to meet the core-course progression (10/7) requirement and Course 2 was not?**

The academic certification program uses the best 10 core courses that meet the core-course progression (10/7) requirement. If two core courses have the same grade, the academic certification process randomly selects one of the core courses, but this may be adjusted at the time of final certification, if necessary.

- 14. The core courses used to meet the core-course progression (10/7) requirement were different at the time of a preliminary certification than at the time of the final certification. Why?**

Core courses used to meet the core-course progression (10/7) requirement at the time of preliminary evaluation may be different than those used at the time of final certification to provide the best possible outcome for a student based on the final academic record.



CORE-COURSE PROGRESSION (10/7) REQUIREMENT (cont.)

15. **Can an additional core-course unit taken after on-time high school graduation replace a course used to meet the core-course progression (10/7) requirement?**

No, but an additional core course after on-time graduation may replace one of the remaining six core-course units necessary to meet core-course distribution requirements.

16. **Are students with a documented Education-Impacting Disability (EID) required to meet the 2016 standards for competition, including the core-course progression requirement?**

Yes. Note that current accommodations (courses for students with an EID [NCAA Division I Bylaw 14.3.1.2.5], nonstandard ACT/SAT [Bylaw 14.3.1.3.3], three additional core-course units after on-time graduation [Bylaw 14.3.1.2.1.2]) are still available under the 2016 standards.

RETAKEN COURSES

17. **If a college-bound student-athlete meets the core-course progression (10/7) requirement, can a core course retaken after the start of the seventh semester still be used to determine eligibility for competition?**

Yes, provided it is not duplicative of another core course needed to meet the core-course progression (10/7) requirement. For example, if a student initially takes Geometry in grade 10 and retakes Geometry in grade 12, the retake would only be used for competition purposes if the grade 10 Geometry course is not needed to meet the core-course progression (10/7) requirement. [Click here to learn more about course title procedures](#)

18. **How will it be determined if a course taken after the start of the seventh semester will be duplicative of a course that was used to meet the core-course progression (10/7) requirement?**

There are no anticipated changes to procedures on determining duplicative coursework. [Click here to learn more about course title procedures](#)

CORE-COURSE GPA CALCULATION

19. **Will a "locked in" GPA be included in a preliminary certification?**

No, there will be a preliminary core-course GPA calculated; however, it will be inclusive of the best core courses available at the time of preliminary evaluation (i.e., not limited to the 10/7).



CORE-COURSE GPA CALCULATION (cont.)

20. Can more than 16 core-course units (i.e., 16.01 to 16.99) be used in the final academic certification for competition purposes?

Yes, provided partial credit (e.g., 0.25, 0.34, 0.5, 0.67) is necessary to meet core-course distribution requirements. However, additional core-course units beyond 16 are not permitted outside of the partial credit scenario. [Click here to learn more](#)

21. Can a college-bound student-athlete who attends a high school that solely uses a pass/fail grading system meet the minimum 2.300 core-course GPA requirement for competition?

Yes, the number of quality points equal to the lowest core-course grade-point average on the sliding-scale index for competition may be included in the academic certification for each core course a student passes at a high school that grades all students in all courses on a pass/fail (e.g., narrative, competency based) basis, provided the high school certifies its grading system by official correspondence. [Click here to learn more](#)

ACADEMIC REDSHIRT

22. What is an academic redshirt?

Academic redshirts may practice in the initial term and receive athletics aid during the initial year of full-time collegiate enrollment but may not compete in their first year of full-time collegiate enrollment. In order to meet the academic redshirt standard, a college-bound student-athlete must:

- Complete 16 core courses;
- Meet the academic redshirt sliding scale (GPA and ACT/SAT sum score); and
- Graduate from high school.

23. How is the academic redshirt certification different than the competition certification? The two academic certifications are separate and distinct. If a college-bound student-athlete does NOT meet all of the initial-eligibility standards (core-course progression requirement, minimum 2.300 core-course GPA) for competition, a separate certification is completed using the 16 core courses with the best grades in the student's academic record (no core-course progression requirement) to calculate the core-course GPA for academic redshirt purposes. This core course GPA is paired with the student's SAT or ACT score and assessed against the academic redshirt sliding scale (minimum 2.000 core-course GPA).

*Note that the academic redshirt certification is similar to the certification for students who graduated before 2016.



PSA REVIEW

24. Will there be any changes to the PSA Review process?

No. Triggers will be applied during preliminary and final evaluations. [Click here to learn more about triggers](#)

INITIAL-ELIGIBILITY WAIVERS

25. Can an initial-eligibility waiver be submitted after the start of the seventh semester if the college-bound student-athlete does not meet the core-course progression (10/7) requirement and thus will be an academic redshirt at best?

No, the member institution cannot submit an initial-eligibility waiver until the NCAA Eligibility Center has released the student's final academic certification decision. This enables the staff and member institution to identify the student's deficiency in meeting academic redshirt and/or qualifier standards based on the student's entire academic record.

26. Will college-bound student-athletes have to meet the core-course progression (10/7) requirement to be eligible to receive an automatic waiver?

Yes.