



## **NCAA DIVISION I PROGRESS-TOWARD-DEGREE WAIVER COMMITTEE PREVIOUSLY APPROVED WAIVERS CHECKLIST JULY 2019**

### **Background.**

The intent of the following modifications to the existing progress-toward-degree waiver process is to reduce bureaucracy and permit the membership and NCAA staff to work more efficiently in limited circumstances. The waiver scenarios listed below are common circumstances where relief has traditionally been provided by staff if the student-athlete was otherwise on pace to meet the academic eligibility requirements when the unforeseen mitigation occurred.

### **Process.**

Similar to the previously approved waiver process utilized by the NCAA Division I Committee for Legislative Relief, institutions may self-apply, on campus, any previously approved waiver specifically listed below without submitting a formal progress-toward degree waiver request to the NCAA national office. An institution is only permitted to self-apply relief (e.g., waive an otherwise applicable progress-toward-degree requirement) if the institution's circumstances appear on the list of designated previously approved waivers, and the circumstances satisfy the specified criteria established for the particular previously approved waiver. If an institution's circumstances do not appear on the list of previously approved waivers, or if the circumstances do not satisfy all of the established criteria for a particular previously approved waiver, the institution must submit a formal progress-toward-degree waiver application to the NCAA national office for consideration.

An institution that grants relief of NCAA legislation based on the specific previously approved waiver circumstances listed below, must maintain the documentation used to make the determination on campus. The list of previously approved waivers will be reviewed on an annual basis by staff. Additionally, the documentation used to apply any of the following previously approved waiver scenarios will be audited through the NCAA Division I Academic Performance Program (APP) data review process.

### **Previously Approved Waiver Scenarios.**

Institutions seeking a progress-toward-degree waiver on behalf of a student-athlete for relief of NCAA Bylaws 14.4.3.1-(a) (24/36 credit hours), 14.4.3.1-(b) (18/27 hours earned during regular academic year), 14.4.3.1-(c) (six hours earned per academic term), 14.4.3.1.2 (credit hour requirements for transfers), 14.4.3.1.6 (additional requirements for football), 14.4.3.1.6.1 (regaining eligibility for two contests), 14.4.3.1.6.2 (regaining eligibility – one-time exception), 14.4.3.2 (40/60/80 percentage of degree), 14.4.3.2.1 (33/50/67 percentage of five-year degree), 14.4.3.3 (90/95/100 grade-point average) and/or 14.4.3.4.2 (eligibility for postseason competition-between terms) may self-apply relief (waive an otherwise applicable progress-toward-degree requirement) if the institution's circumstances appear on the list of designated previously approved waivers, and the circumstances satisfy the specified criteria established for the particular previously approved waiver.

Institutions are expected to maintain documentation to demonstrate the identified criteria existed at the period of time to which the previously approved waiver is applied. Additionally, an academic recovery plan designed by the institution that demonstrates how the student-athlete's individual efforts, course schedule planning (including consideration of academics and athletics related time demands) and use of academic resources (including appropriate accommodations for any education-impacting disability) will allow him or her to overcome academic eligibility deficiencies. A reasonable academic recovery plan also will demonstrate that the student-athlete is likely to graduate within five years of initial full-time enrollment and should include term-by-term scheduling of courses to the greatest extent possible. The plan must be signed by both the student-athlete and an institutional representative with academic oversight for the student-athlete. If the institution or student-athlete fail to adhere to the academic recovery plan on file and it results in a future progress-toward-degree deficiency, the institution must submit a formal progress-toward-degree waiver application to the national office for consideration.

### **Personal Hardships:**

#### **Death of an Immediate Family Member:**

1. The student-athlete experienced the death of an immediate family member during the academic year immediately preceding the deficiency.
2. For purposes of relief in this scenario and others, immediate family member is defined as spouse, parent or legal guardian, child, sibling or domestic partner.

#### **Diagnosis of Terminal Illness of Immediate Family Member:**

1. The student-athlete's immediate family member was diagnosed with a terminal illness during the academic year immediately preceding the deficiency.
2. Immediate family member is defined above.

#### **Victims of Inappropriate Sexual Behavior:**

- The student-athlete was a victim of inappropriate sexual behavior during the academic year immediately preceding the deficiency. Inappropriate sexual behavior includes, but is not limited to; sexual assault, sexual abuse, sexual misconduct or sexual violence.

#### **Inpatient Hospitalization:**

- The student-athlete is hospitalized for a significant amount of time (e.g., two weeks) during the term or academic year that immediately precedes a deficiency.

#### **Catastrophic Events:**

- The student-athlete experienced a loss due to a catastrophic event that occurred at the student-athlete's institution or in the student-athlete's hometown during the academic year immediately preceding the deficiency. A catastrophic event as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is "any natural or manmade incident, including terrorism, that results in extraordinary levels of mass casualties, damage or disruption severely impacting the population, infrastructure, environment, economy, national morale and/or government functions.

### **High Achieving Students.**

#### **Nontransfers with a 3.00 or Above Cumulative Grade-Point Average:**

1. The student-athlete is a continuing undergraduate student that has not transferred at any time and presents a cumulative grade-point average above 3.00 and on an academic track to graduate within five years of initial full-time enrollment.
2. Institution has on file an academic recovery plan that shows graduation within five years.
3. The mitigation asserted must conform to the current directive regarding the standard of review of progress-toward-degree waivers and any documentation corroborating the mitigation must be kept on file.
4. In cases of misadvisement, the institution must complete an institutional recovery and it must be kept on file.

#### **Student-Athlete Entering Final Season of Competition (Credit-Hour Deficiencies Only):**

1. The student-athlete is entering his or her final season of competition and the following academic criteria are met for a credit-hour deficiency:
  - a. Certification that the student-athlete received a satisfactory grade in all degree applicable courses during the previous academic year (two semesters or three quarters);
  - b. Certification that the student-athlete is seeking to participate in his or her final season of competition during the ensuing two semesters or three quarters;
  - c. Documentation that the student-athlete has completed successfully at least 90 percent of the student-athlete's degree program or will complete his or her degree at the end of the ensuing semester or quarter;
  - d. Documentation that the student-athlete meets or exceeds the cumulative grade-point average required for graduation in the student-athlete's degree program;

- e. Certification that the student-athlete had no prior progress-toward-degree deficiencies; and
- f. Evidence that demonstrates that it is reasonable to believe based on the student-athlete's accelerated completion of his or her degree requirements that the student-athlete will earn his or her degree within five years of initial enrollment.

**Other.**

**Financial Aid Only for 4-4 Transfer Students (Bylaw 14.5.5.4):**

- 1. Institution has on file that the previous institution supports the transfer to the certifying institution and supports the certifying institution's offer of institutional athletically related financial aid; and
- 2. The student-athlete currently meets the percentage-of-degree requirements, or equivalent credit hour requirements for transfers at the certifying institution, at the time of transfer to the certifying institution.

**Restrictive Degree Programs (Credit Hour and Percentage of Degree Deficiencies Only):**

- 1. The student-athlete is enrolled in a specific degree program that due to course sequencing, offering limitations, catalog changes or a lack of course substitutions regularly results in credit-hour or percentage of degree deficiencies. The following criteria must be satisfied:
  - a. The student-athlete's failure to pass a course within the degree program or attain a requisite grade-point average did not inhibit his or her progression through the degree program;
  - b. The student-athlete is completing his or her degree as outlined by the institution in its published policies and/or curriculum for the degree program;
  - c. The student-athlete will graduate within the degree programs intended timeline;
  - d. The waiver only applies to credit-hour or percentage of degree deficiencies; and
  - e. All future credit-hour or percentage-of-degree deficiencies are waived, provided the student-athlete follows and completes the academic recovery plan as outlined by the institution.

**Less than Full-Time Enrollment (Joint Degree Programs):**

1. The student-athlete is enrolled in a specific joint degree program that impacts full-time enrollment requirements due to the program being administered by another entity that is recognized as separate from the institution.
2. If a waiver of an institution's specific joint degree program is required, an institution may self-apply a less than full-time enrollment waiver to individual student-athlete's enrolled in the degree program provided the following criteria are satisfied:
  - a. The other entity must be considered part of the certifying institution's university system and governed by the same board of regents or similar governing body;
  - b. Full-time enrollment in the program is administered by the other entity;
  - c. The student-athlete must remain degree seeking at the certifying institution; and
  - d. The student-athlete is permitted by the certifying institution to participate in any extracurricular activities.

**Less than Full-Time Enrollment (Education-Impacting Disability):**

1. The student-athlete has been diagnosed with an education-impacting disability (EID). The following criteria must be satisfied:
  - a. Current, signed documentation of the diagnosis (including test data) and/or recommendations from the treating professional (e.g., medical doctor, clinical psychologist, other qualified individual);
  - b. Copy of the student-athlete's Individualized Education Program or Section 504 Plan, if applicable;
  - c. For a mental health disorder (e.g., depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder), contemporaneous medical documentation must be provided by an individual who is qualified and licensed to diagnose and treat the impairment (e.g., psychiatrist, psychologist);
  - d. Written documentation from an appropriate institutional authority (outside of athletics) that the institution defines full-time enrollment for that student-athlete to be less than 12 hours to accommodate for the EID; and
  - e. An academic recovery plan demonstrating that the course load reduction will not create a future academic deficiency.