

Athletics Handbook



**Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College
Athletic Department**

2025-2026

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As a student, you are responsible for reading this handbook in its entirety. Failure to read this handbook and other sources of regulations governing college life at ABAC does not excuse the student from the requirements and regulations described therein.

You are accountable for your activities on campus and at ABAC sponsored activities. A failure to abide by ABAC or Program policies may result in probation, suspension, or expulsion from the program depending on the nature of the incident.

This handbook does not constitute a contract between ABAC and its students. The plans, policies, and procedures described in this handbook are subject to change by the College at any time. This edition of the handbook does repeal and supersede all previous editions of the handbook.

ATHLETICS DIRECTORY
229-391-4930

Administration

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Women's Basketball

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Men's & Women's Cross Country

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Men's Golf

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Softball

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ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT

ABAC Athletics' mission is to offer a regionally (Southern States Athletics Conference) and nationally (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics) competitive intercollegiate athletic program. Our focus is on building relationships with local and surrounding communities while providing a worthwhile experience for our student-athletes, teaching them the meaning of integrity and ethical conduct, the basic principles of amateur competition, sportsmanship, fair play, and the principle of equitable opportunity for all students including women and minorities. We seek to enhance the academic endeavors of ABAC by helping through our success to attract promising students. Above all, we recognize that the College's obligation is to provide our students with a level of quality education which leads to recognized academic achievement, contributes to their social development, and prepares them to continue their academic and athletic pursuits.

The Athletics Department conducts programs consistent with both the policies and regulations set forth by the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), the Southern States Athletic Conference (SSAC) and Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. The mission of the department is, and shall always remain, compatible with the mission of the college.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

In compliance with state and federal law, including but not limited to the provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and the bylaws of the university, Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, sex, gender, age or disability in admissions or in the administration of its education policies, scholarships, loan programs, athletic and other school-administered rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school.

SOUTHERN STATES ATHLETIC CONFERENCE (SSAC)

The mission of the SSAC is to promote the development of athletics as an integral part of the educational offerings of member institutions by means of democratic participation at the conference level. This aim shall be accomplished by means of the functioning of committees composed of representatives of those institutions, which subscribe to and support athletic programs that shall culminate in truly democratic conference championship competition. The SSAC seeks membership only from accredited institutions that support this aim. The primary criteria for selection and encouragement of membership shall be educational emphasis.

Goals for SSAC Member Institutions

- Ensure that intercollegiate athletics is an integral part of the total educational offering, under the control of those responsible for the administration of the institution.
- Maintain high ethical standards through commitment to the principle of self-reporting.
- Evaluate the athletics program in terms of the educational purpose of the institution.
- Engage in competition with other institutions having similar athletic and academic philosophies and policies, while respecting the diversity that can exist in a conference setting and among its member institutions.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS (NAIA)

In the NAIA, a dedication to leadership development is balanced with sports accomplishment. The NAIA is a trailblazer in providing equal opportunity for all student-athletes and sets expectations of ethical behavior, fairness in competition, access to athletic scholarship, sportsmanship, and leadership development. At the core of all of this is character. The seed of the NAIA began in 1937 with the tip-off of a men's basketball tournament that has become the longest running basketball tournament in the country, celebrating 75 years in 2012. Out of the tournament grew the NAIA, an association of close to 300 member schools and more than 60,000 student-athletes.

Since 1937, the NAIA has administered programs and championships in proper balance with the overall educational experience. In 2000, the NAIA reaffirmed its purpose to enhance the character-building aspects of sport. Through Champions of Character, the NAIA seeks to create an environment in which every student-athlete, coach, official and spectator is committed to the true spirit of competition through five core values: integrity, respect, responsibility, sportsmanship and servant leadership.

NAIA CHAMPIONS OF CHARACTER

The vision of National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) Champions of Character program is to change the culture of sport. Its mission is to provide training to instill the values that build character so students, coaches and parents know, do and value the right thing on and off the field.

The Champions of Character program helps participants find the balance by keeping five core values - integrity, respect, responsibility, sportsmanship, and servant leadership - at the heart of the athletics experience.

Students learn to understand how the values play out in both practice and competition. Coaches are taught how to intentionally define, model, shape and reinforce the values through their coaching and mentoring. Parents learn how their behavior is key to supporting their athletes.

GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCT

Student-athletes are one of the most visible groups in the College community due to their public exposure via the competitive arena and the media. Consequently, their actions are often subject to scrutiny by other members of the campus community. Student-athletes are, therefore, placed in a position which requires exemplary behavior on campus and in the classroom.

Basic courtesy and responsibility as a representative of ABAC Athletics requires that all student athletes:

1. Treat instructors and classmates with courtesy and respect.
2. Arrive to class on time and do not leave early.
3. Be attentive in note taking and active in participating in class discussions.
4. Notify instructors in advance when competition requires missed classes.
5. Discuss with instructors in advance the procedure to be followed if competition necessitates missing an examination or assignment deadline.
6. Follow the rules of ABAC and the classroom instructor.

Similarly, student-athletes' conduct will be closely scrutinized during campus events, travel, and competition. Student-athletes are looked upon as role models, particularly by young children, and it is important that personal conduct be above reproach at all times. It is expected that representatives of ABAC, either at the College or on road trips, will:

1. Abide by all team rules, training rules, and travel rules as outlined by ABAC, the Athletics Department, and the head coach.
2. Dress appropriately as Ambassadors of ABAC.
3. Be courteous, patient, and cooperative with fans, officials, community people and media personnel.
4. Refrain from use of inappropriate language, signs, symbols or unsportsmanlike conduct.
5. Refrain from loud, attention drawing, or discourteous behavior at all times.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Athletes are required to attend all classes and to dress appropriately. The use of cell phones and other electronic devices are not permitted in the classroom. All classes are to be attended. Practices are generally scheduled around class times. Athletes are to make every effort to coordinate their schedule around required practice times set by the coaches. If the athlete has a class that is at the same time as practices, they should consult the coaching staff about the class prior to registration.

Some athletic events could interfere with the athlete's class schedule. The athlete is responsible for notifying the professor ahead of time and making arrangements for all missed work.

PRACTICE ATTENDANCE

All athletes are expected to attend practice and workouts on time every day. Attending practice is a requirement for all Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College athletes. Athletes are to plan their day around required practice and conditioning times set by the coaching staff in their respective sport. Failure to attend practices/conditioning/ games is grounds for dismissal from the athletic team and removal of scholarship immediately.

If a practice is missed, the athlete should notify the coaching staff and they are responsible for making up the work at a later time. If an athlete is unable to practice (injury/eligibility) they are still required to attend all practices.

Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College EJECTION POLICY

An ejection is an action enforced in conjunction with competition by a game official consistent with the playing rules in that sport. A suspension is required by NAIA bylaws (Article 6, Section B, Item 7) and Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College and student athletes must adhere to the rules and policies in place for suspension.

*Ineligibility for the remainder of all regular-season and post-season participation if a student-athlete accumulates three ejections (in one sport) in a single season. Should the third ejection occur in either of the last two contests of the year, the returning student-athlete will be suspended for the first two contests of the following year.

NOTE: ABAC, the Sport Head Coach, or an affiliated conference shall retain the right to apply more stringent penalties than the NAIA rules and standards.

NOTE: Any student-athlete ejected from a junior varsity or varsity contest shall be suspended at the same level or higher as the contest from which the student was ejected.

Contests that are defined as scrimmages and exhibitions shall not satisfy the suspension penalty.

A transfer student who was suspended or declared otherwise ineligible due to misconduct while representing an institution in competition, must serve the period of suspension at the institution to which the student transfers before intercollegiate participation shall be permitted.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

All athletes must ride to and from athletic contests with the team in order to participate. An exception to this policy will require approval from the team coach or athletic director.

ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO PRODUCTS

The use of alcohol, tobacco or tobacco products, including electronic cigarettes and vaping, is not permitted by participants, coaches, trainers, game administrators, or officials in the playing areas **during all NAIA regular season and national tournament competition** and practices for such competition. The institution's coaching staff, event games committee, administrator or host site coordinator (as applicable) shall enforce this policy through the following steps.

- A. On the first offense, the individual(s) shall receive an official warning.
- B. A second offense will cause expulsion from the game, tournament or event.

DRUG TESTING

Any student athlete who takes part in intercollegiate athletic activities, regardless of the sport or likelihood of participation in competition, may be required to provide a sample to be tested for the use of drugs. Such tests may be conducted randomly, upon individuals or an entire team, or upon individuals selected because of a reasonable suspicion of drug use. Such tests may or may not be announced in advance and may be administered at any time selected by the university.

General Testing Procedures:

Testing may be done at any National Championship competition. In accordance with guidelines set forth by the National Drug Testing and Education Committee, the national office will select which championships will incorporate drug testing each year.

Any student-athlete who appears on a team's postseason roster could be tested. For team championship events, student-athletes may be selected based on random selection, playing time, and/or position. For individual championship events, student-athletes may be selected based on random selection, record-setting performance, competitive ranking and/or place of finish.

Disclosure of Results:

For student-athletes who have a positive finding, the third-party testing agency will notify the NAIA National Office and the director of athletics of the finding by phone as soon as possible. The phone contact will be followed by an "overnight" letter (marked "confidential") to the chief executive officer, faculty athletics representative and director of athletics of the institution. Included with the letter will be the supplemental report (positive finding), and

the student athlete's Custody and Control Form. The institution shall notify the student-athlete of the positive test result.

Athletic Sanctions for Positive Results:

Athletic sanctions listed below will only be enforced for positive lab test results. Consequences of a positive test are outlined below by the NAIA.

First Offense: The first offense will result in the student athlete being suspended from all team activities for at least 365 days. During this time the student athlete should not be allowed to dress out or travel with their respective team for competitions. The student athlete will also lose an additional season, beyond the current season of competition.

Second Offense: Any student-athlete who tests positive a second time will lose all eligibility within the NAIA in all sports. (See Bylaws Article VIII, Section B for more information.)

Refusal to Comply:

Refusal to comply or no-shows to test will be treated as a positive result.

PROFANITY

Profanity should not be used at any time for any reason in an athletic event or on campus. ABAC has a no tolerance policy for abusive, lewd, obscene, or vulgar language or expression.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Each athlete should be aware that anything posted on social networks (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, snapchat, etc.) is easily accessed by the whole world. Athletes should not post anything on these sites that is considered inappropriate per standards set by Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. This would include foul language, reference to drugs/alcohol use, or sexually explicit material.

OFF CAMPUS BEHAVIOR

Any athlete found participating in off campus activities that do not uphold the mission statement of Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College will be punished accordingly by the coaching staff. Athletes are expected to act as role models on and off campus.

GAMBLING

ABAC student-athletes are governed by NAIA policies and procedures regarding gambling, regardless of age of participant. All gambling, wagering, providing of information to an organized gambling group or anything else associated with money (gifts) and competition is strictly prohibited and subject to disciplinary action.

OUTSIDE COMPETITION

Student athletes with eligibility remaining may not compete as a member of any outside team or all-star squad in any non-collegiate, amateur competition in their sport except as approved (such as summer basketball leagues) by the NAIA.



NAIA Banned Drugs

It is your responsibility to check with the appropriate or designated athletics staff before using any substance.

1. The NAIA bans the following classes of drugs:
 1. Stimulants.
 2. Anabolic Agents.
 3. Diuretics and Other Masking Agents.
 4. Peptide Hormones and Analogues.
 5. Anti-estrogens; and
 6. Beta-2 Agonists.

Note: Any substance chemically related to these classes is also banned.

The institution and the student-athlete shall be held accountable for all drugs within the banned drug class regardless of whether they have been specifically identified.

2. Drugs and Procedures Subject to Restrictions:
 1. Blood Doping.
 2. Local Anesthetics (under some conditions).
 3. Manipulation of urine samples.
 4. Beta-2 Agonists permitted only by prescription and inhalation.
 5. Caffeine if concentrations in urine exceed 15 micrograms/ml.
3. NAIA Nutritional / Dietary Supplements Warning

Before consuming any nutritional/dietary supplement product, review the product with the appropriate or designated athletics department staff!

1. Dietary supplements, including vitamins and minerals, are not well regulated and may cause a positive drug test result.
2. Student-athletes have tested positive and lost their eligibility using dietary supplements.
3. Many dietary supplements are contaminated with banned drugs not listed on the label.
4. Any product containing a dietary supplement ingredient is taken at your own risk.

Note to Student-Athletes: There is no complete list of banned substances. Do not rely on this list to rule out any supplement ingredient.

Check with your athletics department staff prior to using a supplement.



Some Examples of NAIA Banned Substances in Each Drug Class:

1. Stimulants:
Amphetamine (Adderall); caffeine (guarana); cocaine; ephedrine; fenfluramine (Fen); methamphetamine; methylphenidate (Ritalin); phentermine (Phen); synephrine (bitter orange); methylhexanamine, "bath salts" (mephedrone) etc.

Exceptions: phenylephrine and pseudoephedrine are not banned.
2. Anabolic Agents(sometimes listed as a chemical formula,such as3,6,17-androstenetrione):
Androstenedione; boldenone; clenbuterol; DHEA (7-Keto); epi-trenbolone; etiocholanolone; methasterone; methandienone; nandrolone; norandrostenedione; ostarine, stanozolol; stenbolone; testosterone; trenbolone; etc.
3. Diuretics (water pills) and Other Masking Agents:
Bumetanide; chlorothiazide; furosemide; hydrochlorothiazide; probenecid; spironolactone (canrenone); triameterene; trichlormethiazide; etc.
4. Peptide Hormones and Analogues:
Growth hormone (hGH); human chorionic gonadotropin (hCG); erythropoietin (EPO); etc.
5. Anti-Estrogens:
Anastrozole; tamoxifen; formestane; ATD, clomiphene etc.
6. Beta-2Agonists:
Bambuterol; formoterol; salbutamol; salmeterol; etc.

Additional examples of banned drugs can be found at www.naia.org/wellness.

Any substance that is chemically related to the class, even if it is not listed as an example, is also banned!

Information about ingredients in medications and nutritional/dietary supplements can be obtained by contacting the Drug Free Sport AXISTM 866.635.7877 or www.drugfreesport.com/axis password naialive5.

It is your responsibility to check with the appropriate or designated athletics staff before using any substance.

Athletic Grievances

The following procedures have been established to help guide a student-athlete through a potential grievance (with a staff member of the Athletic Department) and hopefully settle the matter in a professional manner:

1. The student-athlete should meet with the staff member with whom he/she has a grievance.
2. If the grievance is not resolved to the satisfaction of the student-athlete, the student-athlete should write a statement in full detail about the grievance and submit the statement to the Athletic Director. The Athletic Director will then schedule an appointment with the student-athlete.
3. After the first meeting between the student-athlete and the Athletic Director, a second meeting may be called to include the person against whom the grievance has been filed, and the AD will issue a written ruling.
4. If the grievance is still not resolved to the satisfaction of the student-athlete, he/she may submit a written appeal to the President.

Interviews, Media Conferences & Media Releases

The Athletic Director, working in conjunction with the Sports Information Director and the coaches, is ultimately responsible for determining which types of information and commentary are appropriate for media release. Although coaches and student-athletes have the ability to speak with media representatives without supervision, they must keep in mind that certain types of information concerning the Department should be carefully stated and in certain cases discussed with the Head Coach prior to the interview.

****** The administration and coaches should inform the Sports Information Director of any schedule changes, injuries, suspensions, roster changes, personnel changes, etc., ASAP so that the office may be properly informed.

Release of Student Information - FERPA

FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974) protects students' education records maintained by educational institutions.

Student information protected by FERPA includes any student education records not designated as "directory information" by the College. Therefore, the release of non-directory student records without proper authorization by the student is a violation of federal law.

All departmental personnel are expected to comply with College, NAIA and all conference rules and regulations, as well as federal laws regarding the release of student-athletes and prospective student-athletes education records.

Photographs

The Sports Information Director is responsible for maintaining an active file of photographs of University student-athletes, members of the coaching staff and principal administrative officials. Copies are made available to members of the media upon request without charge. "Media Days" are scheduled at a time when the Head Coach of the particular sport knows which squad members will be on the team for the next season and in sufficient time to produce the photographs necessary for use. The Sports Information Director schedules these events in conjunction with the Head Coach. The photography file contains head-and-shoulder portraits of each person noted above. In addition, a file is maintained by sport, containing photographs taken at events during the sports season.

Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct

Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College is committed to providing a safe and non-discriminatory learning and living, environment free of all forms of harassment for all members of the college community and in compliance with all federal and state laws.

Reporting Sex Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, and Sexual Violence

Students who believe they have been subjected to discrimination or sexual misconduct in violation of Title IX should follow the procedures outlined in the university's Title IX procedures to report these concerns immediately. Title IX prohibits retaliation by any student and/or employee against anyone who reports an alleged Title IX violation. The college's Title IX policy and operational procedures are available on the ABAC website. If an incident of sexual misconduct does not meet the Title IX threshold, then the college's other policies apply.

Complaints of discrimination or sexual misconduct or inquiries, regarding the application of Title IX and other laws, regulations, and policies prohibiting discrimination and sexual misconduct may be directed to Richard Spancake, Director of Human Resources, 2802 Moore Hwy, Box 33, Tifton, GA 31793, 229-391-4890; rspancake@abac.edu

Financial Athletic Award (Letter of Intent-LOI)

The Head Coach of each sport recommends the amount of the award to the Athletic Director.

1. Upon the recommendation of the Head Coach, the Financial Athletic Award (LOI) may be renewed each year for up to four years if the student-athlete has met the conditions of the Financial Athletic Award (LOI) Agreement each year.
2. A Financial Athletic Award (LOI) may be refused by a student-athlete. The student- athlete should notify the Head Coach that he/she does not intend to participate prior to the end of each semester and/or the academic year. This action will result in the termination of the Financial Athletic Award (LOI) for the upcoming term.
3. The Head Coach can recommend a Financial Athletic Award (LOI) be reduced for the following academic year.
4. The Head Coach can recommend a Financial Athletic Award (LOI) not be renewed at the end of the academic year.
5. The Head Coach can recommend a Financial Athletic Award (LOI) be terminated during the academic year the agreement applies.
6. A student-athlete receiving a Financial Athletic Award (LOI) is required to make every effort to improve as a player, a student and be a responsible and positive team member as outlined in this Handbook. Failure to do so may result in reduction, non-renewal, or termination of the Financial Athletic Award (LOI).
7. The Financial Athletic Award and other Financial Aid will be awarded by ABAC Office of Financial Aid. The office will award in compliance of all federal, and state regulations, and institutional policies.

Non-Renewal of a Financial Athletic Award (LOI)

Non-renewal of a Financial Athletic Award (LOI) occurs when the agreement expires at the end of the academic year.

1. The Head Coach will inform the student-athlete either in person and/or in writing of their decision NOT to renew the student-athlete's Financial Athletic Award (LOI)

Termination of a Financial Athletic Award (LOI)

Terminating a Financial Athletic Award (LOI) refers to the immediate cancellation of an award during the academic year the agreement applies.

1. The Head Coach will inform the Athletic Director in writing of the recommendation to terminate the student athletes Financial Athletic Award (LOI). This correspondence should include the reasons for this action and all documentation supporting the termination of the Financial Athletic Award (LOI).
2. The Head Coach will schedule a meeting with the student-athlete and at this time inform the student athlete in writing of the recommendation to immediately terminate the student-athletes Financial Athletic Award (LOI). The notification must include the reasons for this action.

Appeal Process

The following procedures have been established to help guide the student-athlete through the appeal process for non-renewal or termination of a Financial Athletic Award.

For Non-Renewal or Termination of a Financial Athletic Award

1. All appeals must be submitted in writing and addressed to the Athletic Director.
2. The written appeal must state on what basis the appeal is being made and contain specific information.
3. The student-athlete has five (5) business days to appeal the Head Coach's and/or the Associate Athletic Director's decision to NOT renew the Financial Athletic Award (LOI) from the day of the Head Coach's meeting and/or written notification to the student-athlete.
4. The Athletic Director will make a decision on the appeal and present it to both parties in writing.
 - The student-athlete may be requested to meet with the Head Coach and Athletic Director. If the student athlete fails to appear for the scheduled meeting, the meeting will be conducted in their absence and a decision rendered.

All athletes must be certified as eligible to participate in accordance with all eligibility rules and regulations outlined in the NAIA bylaws. All eligibility information must be submitted to the SSAC eligibility chair prior to the team's first scrimmage or contest. The NAIA Eligibility Center determines all initial eligibility including all previous season of competition and terms of attendance to be charge to the student-athlete.

NEW STUDENT – ATHLETES – NAIA Eligibility Center

The NAIA Eligibility Center is responsible for determining the NAIA eligibility of first-time student-athletes. Any student playing NAIA championship sports for the first time must meet the eligibility requirements. Students must have their eligibility determined by the NAIA Eligibility Center, and all NAIA schools are bound by the center's decisions. Student-athletes can register at www.playnaia.org

WHO NEEDS TO REGISTER?

Every student interested in playing championship sports at NAIA colleges for the first time needs to register and receive an eligibility determination. This applies to:

- High school seniors
- Home schooled and GED students
- Current NAIA students who will play sports for the first time at an NAIA school
- Transfers from two-year colleges
- Transfers from four-year colleges

Incoming Freshman must meet 2 of the 3 following requirements to be eligible to compete

1. Top 50 of graduating class
2. ACT score of 18 or higher or an SAT score of 970 or higher
3. 2.0 GPA in high school

GED Students

The GED will be recognized as satisfying the grade point average equivalent. The GED student must achieve a score of 18 on the Enhanced ACT or 970 on the SAT to meet the freshman requirements.

Home-schooled Students

Home-schooled students who complete a home schooling program conducted in accordance with the laws of the student's state of residence and achieve a minimum score of 20 on the ACT or 950 (Critical Reading and Math) on the SAT will meet entering freshmen requirements.

Any student who completes a home schooling program, conducted in accordance with the laws of the student's state of residence, may request a home school waiver from the NAIA Home School Committee if the student fails to achieve the required test scores. A student receiving a home school waiver will be recognized as meeting entering freshman requirements. The Council of Faculty Athletics Representatives shall establish policy governing the issuance of a home school waiver by the NAIA Home School Committee.

International Students

An incoming freshman who graduated from a high school outside of the United States or one of the U.S. territories shall meet the same eligibility criteria required of a regular freshman student listed in Article V, Section C, Item 1 and Article V, Section C, Item 2 of the NAIA Handbook. High school graduation and cumulative grade point averages shall be determined based on current published NAIA initial-eligibility academic guidelines for international students.

Maintaining Eligibility

Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College Student-Athletes have 15 terms in which to compete four seasons of competition. Each semester counts as one term. Students-Athletes are to be enrolled full time (12 hours) at all times in order to compete in competition.

Student –Athletes must accumulate 18 hours in two terms in order to compete along with a total of 24 hours in the previous three terms. If transferring from a semester school, they must accumulate 24 hours in the previous two terms.

One Seasons of Competition

24 total hours plus a 2.0 GPA

Two Seasons of Competition

48 total hours plus a 2.0 GPA

Three Seasons of Competition

72 total hours plus a 2.0 GPA

Once the Student- Athlete completes ONE season of competition or is certified as a sophomore academically they must maintain a 2.0 GPA in order to participate along with above requirements.

TRANSFER: PREVIOUS IDENTIFICATION AT A FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTION

1. A student who has participated in an intercollegiate contest at the immediately previous four-year institution and then transfers to an NAIA member institution shall be required to be in residence for a period of 16 calendar weeks before being eligible for the sport(s) previously participated in at the four-year institution. A student shall have the 16 calendar weeks residency requirement waived for participation in that same sport provided the student has a cumulative minimum overall GPA of 2.000 (on a 4.000 scale) from all previously attended institutions of higher learning and receives a written release from the athletics director, assistant or associate athletics director, or compliance officer at the immediately previous four-year institution.
2. A student who has not participated in an intercollegiate contest at the immediately previous four-year institution is not subject to the residency period in that sport. The term "16 weeks" refers to 16 consecutive calendar weeks (112 calendar days), including vacations and inter-terms (except summer terms). The 16 weeks does not refer to school weeks.
3. This period shall be counted from the opening date of classes as stated in the official college catalog or from the date on which the student enrolls, whichever is later. No part of the 16 weeks shall fall between the end of the term immediately preceding the regular summer term and/or summer vacations and the beginning of the fall term.
4. The residency requirement shall be satisfied at the beginning of the day following the end of the 16 calendar weeks (at the beginning of the 113th calendar day) from the first day of class. Should the 16-week period be satisfied after the institution's regular season has been completed, the student has established eligibility for the following season in that sport but is not eligible for postseason athletic competition in that sport which is held during an extended period of the term just completed.

Transfer Policy

Any student -athlete who wishes to transfer from ABAC should take the following steps:

- a. Contact the head coach prior to initiating contact with other schools to discuss options
- b. Once a decision is made and the head coach agrees to the release, the Student-Athlete will then setup a meeting with the head coach and the athletic director to finalize the release.
- c. Once the release is granted by ABAC, the student-athletes scholarship will not be eligible for renewal unless the head coach desires it. The student-athlete will no longer be able to practice or condition in ABAC athletic facilities.

SSAC Transfer Policy

Any student who has participated in any varsity intercollegiate (as defined by the NAIA) athletic contest at one SSAC institution and transfers to another SSAC institution shall not be eligible to participate in that sport for one calendar year from the date they leave the original SSAC institution. Students may request a release from their previous school and if granted, they would be eligible to compete.

Student-Athletes Withdrawing From a Class

Student athletes must be always enrolled in at least 12 hours. If you wish to drop a class, you must do the following:

1. The student-athlete must notify their head coach and the compliance coordinator (Kaitlyn Hunt) of their intentions to withdraw from a class.
2. The coaching staff member and/or the student-athlete will verify with the Compliance Coordinator that withdrawing from the class will not affect eligibility.

*Drop/add deadlines for official withdrawal are found through the official ABAC Academic Calendar provided online.

Season of Competition:

- a. Participation in more than 20% of the maximum allowable number of intercollegiate contests or dates (excluding scrimmages) at an NAIA institution, whether in a varsity, junior varsity or freshman program, during the 24-week season. Any participation in NAIA-approved postseason shall result in a season of competition. The NAIA shall count seasons of competition based on intercollegiate participation charged by another intercollegiate athletic association.
- b. Participation in any elite-level competition on or after the first day of the thirteenth month following high school graduation. The NAIA shall take at face value seasons of competition based on non-collegiate participation as assessed by another intercollegiate athletic association, including determination of unattached status. Additional seasons of competition, based on non-collegiate participation, will be charged when the student is not enrolled in a collegiate institution, or is enrolled but does not represent the institution in intercollegiate competition.

Medical Expectations

As a student-athlete at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, you are expected to take care of yourself both physically and mentally. As a student-athlete at ABAC you are expected to follow all orders from the medical staff at all times. When appointments are scheduled, you are expected to be on time and dressed appropriately. When the medical staff lays out a treatment plan, you are expected to follow every detail of the treatment plan.

Non-Sport Related Injury/Illness

The ABAC Office of Athletics does not assume financial responsibility for injuries and/or illnesses that are not the direct result of supervised ABAC-sanctioned athletics participation. Medical bills associated with such conditions will be the sole responsibility of the student-athlete and/or his/her parent(s)/guardian(s).

Primary, Secondary, and Catastrophic Insurance Coverage

The student-athlete's personal insurance coverage will be considered as primary coverage for all athletics-related injuries and/or illnesses and must remain active during all athletic participation. The student-athlete must provide a copy of their personal insurance policy listing their name and effective dates on the insurance card. If the card provided does not include this information, then an "Effective Date Letter" needs to be provided containing this information. The student athlete must provide a copy of their insurance card prior to any medical referral. This policy includes any insurance coverage carried by international student athletes at ABAC.

The Office of Athletics provides an insurance policy that serves as secondary insurance coverage for all athletics-related injuries. This coverage is not available for any condition that is not directly related to ABAC Intercollegiate Athletics' participation (i.e. – illnesses, pregnancy, non-athletic accidents, dental/vision screenings, etc). This policy is secondary to, or in excess of, any personal family medical insurance coverage and applies only to injuries/illnesses/accidents resulting from the direct participation in the ABAC Intercollegiate Athletics' Program during the dates of the primary competitive season and designated off-seasons as approved by the Director of Athletics and Asst. Dean of Students according to NAIA regulations. All physician appointments should go through our Athletic Trainer.

A Catastrophic Insurance Program for ABAC student athletes is provided. This policy only applies to claims made from catastrophic injuries that are directly related to participation in NAIA-sanctioned sports.

Compliance with Insurance Company Requests

It is the student-athlete's responsibility to understand the conditions that apply to their policy and to comply with any requests for information, etc. from the primary insurance company. All bills need to be sent to the patient/student-athlete.

HMO's

If a student-athlete's primary insurance is an HMO, ABAC strongly encourages the student-athlete and/or his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) to change the primary care physician (for the student only) to an ABAC referred physician, or another local physician considered to be in network for that plan. This will allow the student-athlete to initiate care for a medical condition much more efficiently and effectively.

Insurance Policy Changes

The ABAC Office of Athletics and Athletic Trainer MUST receive notice of any changes to a health insurance policy as soon as they occur. If proper notification is not received, ABAC will not be responsible for any delays in payment, collections notices, credit reports, etc. that occur.

Pre-Participation Physicals

Each athlete is required to have a physical before the first practice and workouts prior to the athlete competing in their designated sport. Physicals must be done with Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. NO outside physicals will be accepted.

For the athlete to participate in any intercollegiate activity the physical must be on file with the head athletic trainer prior to any team practice, scrimmage, or athletic event.

Annual physicals are given at ABAC prior to the start of each Fall semester. There is NO FEE for these physical exams. If you miss the dates for annual physicals, the athletic trainers will schedule you an appointment to receive your physical. **Athletes must complete pre-participation forms upon arriving for their physical.**

Clearance to play is withheld until all parts of the pre-participation forms and concussion baseline testing is completed and on file in the athletic training room. Physical examinations **are only valid for one year from the date of service and can only be validated by an MD, D.O.**

INCLEMENT WEATHER/ LIGHTENING GUIDELINE PROCEDURES

Monitoring the Game/ Practice

Prior to Game/ Practice

The Weather System will be used by both athletic trainers and coaches to monitor changing weather patterns. This program allows for up to the minute information for severe weather and lightening to the **Athletic Trainer/ Game Manager/ Coaching Staff.**

***** Athletic Trainers/ Game Manager can contact Local Emergency Management if necessary to determine weather conditions.***

***** The athletic trainer will notify the game officials/ head coaches of the possibility of severe weather and lightening prior to the event and throughout the game / practice. The athletic trainer has the right to delay play if lightening has been spotted prior to the game / practice.***

Game Started

***** Once the game has started it is the responsibility of the game official to make the call about suspending play. This decision should be based on weather information received from the athletic training staff.***

***** In the event of severe weather or lightening, announcements via the PA system will be made regarding the potential for such storms to develop and the possibility of vacating the sports facilities for safer areas.***

Practice Started

** Once practice has started it is the responsibility of the head coach to make the call about suspending practice. This decision should be based on weather information received from thru the Weather App

- I. The following alerts will prompt athletic training staff and athletics staff to make accommodations for both student athletes and spectators to begin seeking safe areas.

Alerts for Real time Lightening Procedures to Take Effect

Alert	Meaning	Action
"Heads Up"	Lightning within 15 miles	1.ATC notifies Game Official 2.SID makes PA announcement
"Begin safety Procedures"	Lightning within 10 Miles	1.Suspend Play 2.Begin moving student-athletes to designed safe areas 3. PA announcement to clear spectators from field and surrounding area.
"You are now in danger; area safety procedures should be complete"	Lightning within 6 Miles	1. All student-athletes should be indoors. 2. All spectators should be clear of field/ facility 3. ATC monitors weather to determine when play can resume
"All Clear"	Lightning has not be detected for 30 Minutes	1.Student-athletes and spectators are allowed back on the field/facility

HYDRATION PLAN

Ways to stay Hydrated:

- Drink throughout the day
- Drink 17-20oz of fluid 2-3 hours BEFORE practice
- Drink an additional 7-10oz of fluid 10-20 min prior to starting practice
- Drink 28-40oz of fluid per hour to replace sweat loss during exercise
- Drink 20oz per pound of weight loss within two hours of finishing training
- For optimal performance, drink as much as sweat was lost.

Ways to stay Cool:

- Get in shape and acclimate to humidity
- Know the warning signs of dehydration and heat illness
- Don't rely on thirst to drink, it is not a good indicator of dehydration
- Favor sport drinks if possible
- Monitor body weight
- Watch urine color: the clearer the better
- Avoid caffeine
- Drink a lot of fluids during your meal time
- Consume adequate dietary sodium

Signs of Dehydration and Heat Illness:

- Headache
- Dizziness or Lightheadedness
- Weakness
- Irritability
- Early Fatigue and weakness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Muscle Cramps --To avoid heat cramps, consume sodium in your diet and drink sports drinks

Signs of Heat Stroke (Life Threatening):

- Dangerously high temperature
- Confusion and disorientation
- Irrational Behavior
- Drowsiness
- Nausea

Fluids to Avoid:

- Carbonated beverages, as in soda
- Fruit Juice
- Energy drinks
- Protein Supplements

Heat illnesses such as Heat Cramps, Heat Exhaustion and life-threatening Heat Stroke are very serious. You must do your part to prevent these situations, let the medical staff know how you are feeling. Be aware of your teammates. If you believe they are displaying any signs of heat illness, let the medical staff know immediately. Drink plenty of fluids before, during, and after exercise.

Emergency Action Plan

Emergency Personnel: Certified Athletic Trainers, Student Athletic Trainers, Team Physicians (if present), Coaching staff onsite, Campus Security

Scenarios

Cardiac

Signs and Symptoms:

- Difficulty breathing, absence of breathing, chest pain, confusion, dizziness, difficulty speaking, pain or numbness down left arm/shoulder, headache, nausea.
- Tachycardia (rapid HR, typically over 100 bpm at rest and increasing).
- Bradycardia (less than 45-50 bpm at rest).

Care:

- In case of a suspected cardiac issue or heart attack. Call 911 immediately.
- If athlete is conscious, then keep them calm as possible until help arrives, encouraging to sit and take slow deep breaths.
- Perform CPR if athlete stops breathing. Student assistant coach is to retrieve AED as directed on EAP.

Heat Illness

Signs and Symptoms:

- Muscle cramping, altered mental behavior, body feels extremely warm, no sweating, rapid heart rate, syncope.

Care:

- Remove athlete from hot condition into cool indoors.
- Remove clothing if possible.
- Apply ice bags to neck, groin, arm pits. And/or cold shower. OR place athlete in ice bath.

Excessive Bleeding

Signs and Symptoms:

- Excessive bleeding, and/or compound fracture can lead to hypovolemic shock.

Care:

- Put on gloves.
- Apply direct pressure using gauze if possible. In extreme cases use towels until help arrives with tourniquet.
- If extremity, elevate above heart level.
- If still bleeding, have another person apply pressure at the shoulder (brachial artery) if arm, or groin (femoral artery) if leg.

Diabetic, Hyperglycemia, Hypoglycemia

Signs and Symptoms:

- Hypoglycemia; sudden onset, poor coordination, irritable, pale, confusion, sweating, shakiness, hunger, seizure.
- Hyperglycemia; drowsiness, extreme thirst, frequent urination, fruity breath, vomiting, flushed skin color, heavy breathing.

Care:

- Hypoglycemia; eat 15 grams of sugar, if symptoms do not improve after 15 minutes, give another 15 grams. If still no improvement, call 911 as EMS can provide IV.
- Hyperglycemia; most are considered diabetic so athlete should administer insulin and drink water. If symptoms do not improve even after insulin is administered, call 911 for assistance.

Seizures

Signs and Symptoms:

- Full body twitching, unconsciousness, zone out, weakness on one side of the body.

Care:

- Remove things out of the way that could cause further injury, do not restrain them, lay down, place a soft pillow/clothing under their head, if you suspect the seizure is related to heat illness then try cooling them after seizure.

Allergic Reaction

Signs and Symptoms:

- Rash, skin redness/irritation, known insect sting.
- Anaphylaxis; swelling, difficulty breathing, chest tightness, coughing, increase heart rate.

Care:

- Wash area and apply hydrocortisone cream.
- Give Benadryl if needed.
- Anaphylaxis; give Benadryl if they can swallow then EpiPen. If they are not able to swallow then administer EpiPen.

Concussion

Signs and symptoms:

- Known hit to the head
- Headache, dizziness, balance issues, loss of consciousness, nausea, vomiting, neck pain, lightheaded, sensitivity to light and/or noise.

Care:

- If you suspect an athlete has a concussion or know they have hit their head, let the AT know immediately.
- Once the AT is informed, an evaluation and plan will be set in place.
- The athlete is not to return to play until AT and/or doctor has cleared them to return.
- The return to play protocol is at minimum 6-7 days, given that the athlete is improving and symptom free.

*Athletes who are actively on the concussion protocol are not to travel with their teams.

ABAC Athletics will abide by the NAIA Policy as well as the NCAA Best Practices.

Photographic Consent and Release

I hereby authorize ABAC, and those acting pursuant to its authority to:

(a) Record my likeness and voice on a video, audio, photographic, digital, electronic or any other medium,

(b) Use my name in connection with these recordings, and

(c) Use, reproduce, exhibit or distribute in any medium, these recordings for any purpose that ABAC, and those acting pursuant to its authority, deem appropriate.

I release ABAC and those acting pursuant to its authority from liability for any violation of any personal or proprietary right I may have in connection with such use. I understand that all such recordings, in whatever medium, shall remain the property of the College. I have read and fully understand the terms of this release.

Student Athlete

Date

Parent or Guardian
(If student is under 18 years of age)

Date

Acknowledgment

I have read this handbook, understand its terms, agree to its terms, and sign it freely and voluntarily.

Student Athlete

Date

Parent or Guardian
(If student is under 18 years of age)

Date