

**TO:** University Curriculum Committee

**FROM:** PAAC

**RE:** Registration Change for Student Athletes [Effective: Summer 2008]

**DATE:** September 12, 2007

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**Objectives:** Obtain the University Curriculum Committee's endorsement of my proposal to present to the Faculty Council for approval.

**Proposal:** Allow student athletes at the University of Idaho to register for classes on the first day of the registration cycle when seniors do.

**Reasoning:**

- Every school in the WAC has it. Most representatives (athletic or registrar) that I spoke with were surprised that Idaho does not have early registration for student athletes. They see it as a necessity.
- Student athletes have rigorous practice and competition schedules to adhere to. In season, athletes practice up to 20 hours a week and spend countless hours traveling and competing. Early registration would allow them to have some flexibility in the classes that best fit their schedules.
- Student athletes are the only group on campus that must abide by strict progress toward degree requirements (40, 60, 80 rule). Not being able to get into classes and acquire the credits they need in order to meet NCAA requirements forces student athletes to either face ineligibility or switch to a less demanding major.
- Student athletes must be enrolled in 12 credits during the school year to be eligible to practice and compete. If a student athlete is on the wait list for a class and is unable to fulfill this requirement, he or she may enroll in a filler class that does not necessarily contribute to their progress toward degree completion. This jeopardizes their eligibility to practice/compete and takes seats in the class away from other students who want to be in the class. Early registration would eliminate this problem for athletes and the other students.
- Early registration would save time. It would eliminate paper work and time spent by the athletic department and professors discussing the issue of an athlete on a class wait list.
- Scholarship athletes are investments made by the University of Idaho--- why not provide a system that will allow them to be as successful as possible?

**Things to Keep in Mind:**

- Early registration should not be considered "preferential treatment." Student athletes are at a disadvantage because they are obligated to give several hours of their week to practice, travel and competition--- requirements that the University demands from no other group.
- Athletes graduating will not need pre registration. This lessens the impact on the general student body during registration time.
- A large portion of the general student population, the seniors (approximately 25%) and grad students will not have a cause for complaint since they will not be registering anymore or already have priority registration.
- Early registration for student athletes mainly impacts lower classmen because so many have to take the same core classes and prerequisites.
- Athletes account for a very small portion of the total student body—about 340 out of nearly 12,000, 2.8%.

**Conclusions/Observations Drawn from Research:**

- The average number of years from the 9 schools I talked with has had early registration for student athletes is 12.
- Many different systems for registration exist. Usually athletes are allowed to register with honors and disability students one day earlier than the general student body.
- In general, no specific criteria exist to determine which groups should be allowed to register early. Proposals usually go through a faculty committee like the Faculty Senate (NMSU) for approval.
- There was/is very little negative backlash as the result of instating early registration for athletes. Some schools experienced a little but it quickly dissipated and people accepted the new policy.
- Athletes **do** take advantage of the ability to register early. It has been successful at many schools because of the involvement of the athletic department. Some schools have strong promotion and assistance with registration procedures.
- Most of the schools allow a small portion of the student body to register early.
- "I haven't heard of many places in my career that don't have it." –Gabe Rosenvall, Assistant AD at Boise State
- "If you're going to be involved in NCAA sports, you must have early registration." –Tania Swanger, WSU Athletic Compliance Coordinator
- These schools don't consider early registration "preferential treatment."

## Supporting Research

	<b>Fresno State</b>	<b>Louisiana Tech</b>	<b>Washington State</b>
<b>Talked With</b>	<b>Christina Beddall, Registrar</b>	<b>Buddy Johnson, Assistant Registrar</b>	<b>Tania Swanger, Athletic Compliance Coordinator</b>
<b>When priority registration was instituted</b>	At least 20 years ago.	At least 15 years ago.	At least 10 years ago.
<b>When athletes are allowed to register</b>	First day of registration cycle, one day before the general student body.	Same day as but after honors group, one day before general student pop.	One day earlier than general student pop.
<b>Other student groups allowed to pre-register for classes</b>	Students with disabilities, grad students, marching band (in the fall only), Honors program, 4 year degree program.	Honors, grads and student with disabilities.	Grad students, Professions Program, disabled.
<b>Criteria for permitting groups priority registration</b>	??? Reviewed through Enrolment Management Committee. Requests go through registrar then to committee. Very strict selection.	Based on absence from class, practice schedules and need to satisfy degree requirements. Proposals go through Dean of Students to be reviewed and approved.	Must be at a <b>disadvantage</b> --- physical constraints, practice, competition schedules. Purpose is to create level playing field.
<b>Reaction around campus regarding early registration for student athletes</b>	No negative backlash. Very strict about honoring priority registration.	Only from groups denied the ability to register early.	No negative reaction. Only from groups excluded (Honors). Very clear about who has disadvantage.
<b>Do athletes actually take advantage of early registration?</b>	Yes. Through strong advising and support from the athletic department, athletes are aware and encouraged to register on time.	Majority do. Those that do not usually have administration holds are unable to pay the fees in time to register.	Yes. Athletes have counselors in athletic department. They are made very aware of when to register.
<b>How many students will pre-registration affect</b>	Approximately 1,000 out of 20,000 students.	Student athletes comprise 330 out of 11,000, small number from other groups.	400-500 athletes out of 18,000 students.

	<b>New Mexico State</b>	<b>Hawaii</b>	<b>Boise State</b>
<b>Talked With</b>	<b>Mike Zimmerman, Registrar</b>	<b>Secretary to Athletic Director, <a href="#">Marge Okimoto</a></b>	<b>Gabe Rosenvall, Assistant AD</b>
<b>When priority registration was instituted</b>	1992-1994.	About 5 years ago.	15-20 years ago.
<b>When athletes are allowed to register</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> day of registration, after Crimson Scholars, 1 day before general student body.	1 day before general students, with grad students.	2 weeks before general population.
<b>Other student groups allowed to pre-register for classes</b>	Crimson Scholars (high GPA), grad and disabled students.	Grad and students with disabilities.	ROTC, disabilities, grad students.
<b>Criteria for permitting groups priority registration</b>	No specific criteria. Approval through Faculty Senate.	???	No specific criteria. Justification: cannot miss academics for athletics and practice and travel conflicts.
<b>Reaction around campus regarding early registration for student athletes</b>	Some faculty staff did not agree at time. No longer an issue. Won't publish in school brochure because it's controversial.	Good and bad reaction. Complaints eventually went away as people accepted it. Have not changed procedure as result.	No. Been available for a while. Strong support from administration, especially registrar's office.
<b>Do athletes actually take advantage of early registration?</b>	About 85% do. Have new group of athletic academic advisors that promote it.	Yes, even while traveling, coaches help them register.	"Vast majority" do.
<b>How many students will pre-registration affect</b>	About 5,000 out of 16,500. 350 are athletes.	?? Registrar's response: Everyone benefits.	350 athletes out of 18,000 (includes technical school and grad students).

	<b>Utah State</b>	<b>Nevada Reno</b>	<b>San Jose State</b>
<b>Talked With</b>	<b>Brian Evans, Associate AD- Student Services</b>	<b>Cara Nero, Admissions and Records Assistant Sandra Niedorgall, Director of Compliance</b>	<b>Drew Agbie, Athletic Advisor</b>
<b>When priority registration was instituted</b>	Around 10 years ago.	2000-2001 academic year.	At least 4 years.
<b>When athletes are allowed to register</b>	Wednesday through Friday, when the general student body starts the following Monday.	With honor students, one day before seniors and grad students.	Varies by semester. Registrar chooses. Usually a few days but no more than a week. In summer it is
<b>Other student groups allowed to pre-register for classes</b>	Honors, students in Multicultural Student Services, disabilities.	Honors and disability.	Honors and disabilities.
<b>Criteria for permitting groups priority registration</b>	Reviewed through registrar's office. Last semester got rid of groups that did not truly need it.	Went through faculty senate than to the President's office. Current president strongly approved.	? W/ athletes, they came to school to participate in a university activity where SJSU chooses practice times. Athletes also have to remain eligible to compete.
<b>Reaction around campus regarding early registration for student athletes</b>	"None whatsoever." No complaints from administration or faculty. Only positive things.	Some grumbles, nobody really spoke out. Titled "early registration" to avoid claims of preferential treatment. President doesn't allow it to be a debated issue.	Questions whether or not people even know about it. It is downplayed to avoid negative reaction. Coaches are informed of reg. time and inform their athletes.
<b>Do athletes actually take advantage of early registration?</b>	About 97% do. Students see their advisor and get a form listing their classes. They bring that form to an advisor in the athletic department who registers for them.	About 80% do. When first instituted, it was especially high. Athletes are threatened with missing practice or competition if they do not register on time.	Yes, about 85-90% do.
<b>How many students will pre-registration affect</b>	320 athletes. Between 500-600 students total out of 21,000.	420 student athletes out of 16,200.	1,300 out of 30,000 are athletes are athletes or have disabilities (350 athletes, 950 disabled).