

**AMERICAN UNIVERSITY  
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY  
Self-Study Items**

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**Institutional Response from First Self-Study – Additional Funds. Additional funds should be requested to pay for tutoring in individual courses for all student athletes; the reporting of mid-term grades for all freshmen and others experiencing academic difficulty should be required, and Senate requirements for reporting mid-term grades should be strengthened to conform with the above. Also, ways to strengthen the faculty team advisor program should be considered. (Refer to Institutional Responses Section, Academic Integrity, item #1).**

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**Self-Study Item 2.1.1 – Student Admissions Process**

**Describe the process by which student-athletes are admitted to AU and compare AU's process to the process for admitting students generally.**

There is no difference between the process by which student-athletes are admitted to AU and the process for admitting students generally. Official application materials must be submitted to the Office of Admissions where student files are evaluated. Admission to the university is based on a competitive admission process that evaluates candidates for admission based on the strength of their performance in high school [as measured by Grade Point Average (GPA), distribution of courses, and overall rigor of the academic program], performance on standardized tests, letters of recommendation, and extracurricular activities. There are no minimums or "cutoffs" on standardized tests.

Student-athletes seeking admission are required to have an academic profile that is comparable to other non-athlete students who are being offered admission to the university. AU's membership in the Patriot League requires that the student-athlete have an academic profile that is comparable to the profiles of admitted and enrolled students in general. This is measured by the Academic Index (AI), which is calculated using a formula that includes GPA and SAT information. Consistent with Patriot League guidelines, AU derives an AI for all accepted and enrolled students and then calculates the average. A standard deviation is derived for each group. The floor for admitting recruited athletes is within two standard deviations of the matriculated class.

**Self-Study Item 2.1.2 – Admissions Profiles**

**Compare the admissions profiles of student-athletes who received athletics grants-in-aid with the profiles of students in general.**

See attached charts.

### **Self-Study Item 2.1.3.a – Student Admissions Process – Other Processes**

**Describe the process by which students may be admitted if they do not meet the institution's standard or normal entrance requirements. Include any second-level or subsequent review process or appeals procedures that may be utilized when students are not automatically admitted because they do not meet the institution's published entrance requirements.**

Admission to American University is competitive and requires that applicants meet the following minimum criteria:

#### **Freshman Applicants**

- Have graduated from secondary school with at least 15 academic units, including at least four units in English, three units in college preparatory mathematics (including the equivalent of two units in algebra), two units in foreign language(s), two units in natural or lab science, and two units in social sciences (or submit GED results).
- Have a minimum academic average of C or better.
- Submit the results of either the SAT I or the ACT college entrance examinations.

There are no published minimum requirements for admission (beyond the previously referenced GPA minimum of C or better). Admission to the university is not automatic but rather based on a competitive admission process that evaluates candidates for admission on the strength of their performance in high school (as measured by GPA, distribution of courses, and overall rigor of the academic program), performance on standardized tests, letters of recommendation, and extracurricular activities. There are no minimums or "cutoffs" on standardized tests. In compliance with guidelines set by The College Board and the National Association for College Admission Counseling, our statistical profile is reported in 25th through 75th percentile ranges as follows:

GPA: 2.93 - 3.53

SAT: 1130 - 1290

ACT: 24 - 29

There are provisions in the process that allow for admissions of candidates who may not meet the traditional profile (as described in the percentile ranges above), these students are not viewed as exceptions. The university offers a range of services and programs designed to support students who demonstrate potential for success but who may have special needs. Examples of these programs and services include Learning Services and the Summer Transitional Enrichment Program. Through 2003, the Excel Program and the English Language Institute have been able to assist; however, both will be discontinued after spring 2003. The English Language Academic Support Program will be in effect for fall 2003.

## **Transfer Applicants**

Admission to American University for transfer applicants is competitive and requires that applicants meet the following minimum criteria:

- Must be in good academic and social standing at the school previously attended
- Must come from a regionally accredited collegiate institution bearing an AG rating (credit generally accepted for courses which are appropriate to the reporting institution's baccalaureate programs) or AP rating (credit accepted on a provisional basis subject to validation as prescribed by the reporting institution) in the Transfer Credit Practices of Designated Educational Institutions published by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers, and recognized candidates for regional accreditation as defined in Accredited Institutions of Higher Education published by the Federation of Regionally Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education. (Note: Students from new and non-accredited regional institutions may also be admitted, but no transfer credit may be awarded from such institutions.)
- Must have a minimum grade point average of 2.00 on a 4.00 scale at an AG-rated regionally accredited institution or an average of 3.00 or above on a 4.00 scale in all work attempted at an AP-rated regionally accredited institution. (Note: Applicants with fewer than 24 credit hours completed at the time of application must submit the secondary school record and standardized test results)

There are no published minimum requirements for admission (beyond the previously referenced GPA minimum of C or better). Admission to the university is not automatic but rather based on a competitive admission process that evaluates candidates for admission on the strength of their performance at the postsecondary level (as well as the secondary level when appropriate).

## **International Applicants**

American University highly values international students and receives many applications each year from around the world. Given the diversity of international educational systems, successful candidates for admission are required, at a minimum, to demonstrate academic achievement at the secondary (or in the case of prospective transfer applicants, postsecondary) level that would make them eligible for university-level study in their home countries.

For international students, AU requires that all applicants whose first language is not English, regardless of citizenship, take an English language proficiency examination. Applicants take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). The university has recently adopted the TOEFL score of 550 (written version) as a requirement for admission.

Effective in fall 2003, applicants whose first language is not English, regardless of citizenship, will be required to take one of the following exams and achieve the indicated scores in order to demonstrate English-language provide evidence of English language competency appropriate to college-level classes:

- TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language): Score of 550 or higher on the paper-based test or 213 or higher on the computer-based test.
- SAT I -- Reasoning Test (Verbal): Score of 530 or higher.
- SAT II -- Subject Test-English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT): Score of 970 or higher.
- International English Language Testing System (IELTS): Score of 6.5 or higher .
- Advanced Placement International English Language Assessment (APIEL): Score of 3 or higher. Note: This test is no longer being offered by ETS; AU will accept test scores from applicants who have taken the test in previous years.

Transfer international applicants who have completed two academic English writing courses with a grade of C or better at a U.S. college or university are exempt from submitting scores from these examinations.

### **Appeals Process**

Students who are not offered admission to AU may appeal the decision in writing. Appeals must be submitted by students (rather than parents or counselors) and must include information not previously included in the application. This may include but is not limited to new grades, standardized test scores, letters of recommendation, explanation of special circumstances, etc. Appeals are reviewed by the Director of Admissions in consultation with appropriate staff members.

### **Self-Study Item 2.1.3.b -- Student Admissions Process – Other Processes and Financial Aid**

**Compare and explain any difference between the percentage of freshman student-athletes receiving athletics aid who were admitted through any of the processes described in #3 above and the percentage of freshman students generally who were so admitted. Provide these comparative data for the three most recent academic years. For the student-athlete data, information should be displayed for each of the sport groups, organized by year, and listed in the NCAA Division I Graduation-Rates supplemental form.**

All students must meet university guidelines for admission. American University does not admit any student-athletes by special exception. However, programs are available for any or all students who may need additional academic support during their freshman year. For example, the Summer Transitional Enrichment Program (STEP) enrolls approximately 25-35 U.S. minority students in a six-week summer program. Until this year, the university also offered the Excel Program, which began in 1992 under the name Project Challenge. Excel was designed for students whose standardized test scores and grades were inconsistent with each other but who demonstrated the potential for success and, ultimately, graduation. Each year 35-50 students enrolled in the Excel Program; however, this program will be phased out during the academic year 2002-2003.

During the 1999-2000 academic year, 14.4% of the incoming freshman class was admitted to the university through some type of academic support program. The percentage of student-athletes on athletics aid admitted under special provision for that same academic year was 14.0%. Students entering the university during the fall 2000 semester with a provisional admission represented 12% of the freshman class that year. Student-athletes with provisional admission on athletics aid during that same time period represented only 6.8%. The percentage of students admitted to the university through an academic support program for the current academic year (2001-02) is 11.0%. The comparable statistic for student-athletes receiving athletics aid is 13.5%. The slightly higher percentage in comparison to the class overall can be explained by the fact that 20% of the student-athlete group were international students who were admitted to the university with a provision that they take a placement test to determine their English language proficiency. These students are all making satisfactory progress toward earning their degrees.

#### **Self-Study Item 2.1.4 -- Sequence of Actions for Initial Eligibility for Transfers**

**List the step-by-step sequence of actions taken by particular individuals on your institution's campus to certify initial eligibility for transfer student-athletes. Identify the individual(s) with final authority for certifying initial eligibility, and their titles.**

The step-by-step sequence of actions is as follows:

1. The director of admissions or his/her designee reviews and evaluates prospective student-athletes' applications and transcripts.
2. The director of admissions or his/her designee determines each prospective student-athlete's total number of transferable credits and whether that number and the prospective student-athlete's grades meet the university's standards for admissions and NCAA requirements for eligibility.

3. The admissions office returns the prospective student-athlete's credentials to the department of athletics, usually to the coach of the sport that is recruiting the prospective student-athlete.
4. The coach returns the credentials to the assistant athletics director for compliance and administration.
5. The assistant athletics director for compliance and administration forwards the credentials to the dean's office of the school or college in which the prospective student-athlete plans to enroll.
6. The dean's designee reviews and evaluates the transfer credits and determines whether the student-athlete has satisfied the satisfactory progress requirements (the 25-50-75 rule) and has declared a major, where applicable.
7. The dean's designee returns the student-athlete's completed certification to the assistant athletics director for compliance and administration.
8. The assistant athletics director for compliance and administration forwards the student-athlete's completed certification to the faculty athletics representative (FAR) for review and verification.
9. When the FAR is satisfied that the transcript demonstrates that the student-athlete is satisfying continuing eligibility standards, the FAR signs the completed certification and returns it to the assistant athletics director for compliance and administration.

### **Self-Study Item 2.1.5 -- Sequence of Actions for Continuing Eligibility**

**List the step-by-step sequence of actions taken by particular individuals on your institution's campus to certify initial eligibility for transfer student-athletes. Identify by name and title the individual(s) with final authority for certifying continuing eligibility.**

The step-by-step sequence of actions is as follows:

1. The assistant athletics director for compliance and administration, in consultation with the senior assistant university registrar and the IT systems support coordinator in the Office of the Registrar, obtains copies of the permanent records (unofficial transcripts) of each student-athlete with the certification form on the reverse side.
2. The assistant athletics director for compliance and administration divides the student-athletes' transcripts according to their course disciplines.

3. The assistant athletics director for compliance and administration forwards the transcripts to the appropriate academic advisors within the five undergraduate schools who are responsible for oversight of student-athlete academic performance in those disciplines.
4. The academic advisors within the undergraduate schools review the transcripts to certify that students are registered full-time, in the process of satisfying university requirements, have declared majors when applicable, and are making satisfactory progress toward completing the general education and major requirements. The academic advisors also review the transcripts to ensure that the student-athletes are in compliance with the NCAA regulations as they pertain to academic progress.
5. After reviewing the student-athletes' transcripts, the academic advisors signify that the student-athletes are eligible by signing the reverse side of the academic record, at the end of the form developed by the athletics department.
6. The academic advisors return the transcripts to the assistant athletics director for compliance and administration.
7. The assistant athletics director for compliance and administration forwards the transcripts to the FAR for review and verification.
8. When the FAR is satisfied that the transcripts demonstrate that the student-athletes are satisfying continuing eligibility standards, the FAR signs the transcripts and returns them to the assistant athletics director for compliance and administration.
9. The assistant athletics director for compliance and administration uses the same process as the FAR, signing each transcript when he/she is satisfied that it demonstrates that the student-athletes are satisfying the standards for continuing eligibility.

### **Self-Study Item 2.1.6 – Official NCAA Graduate-Rates Reports -- 1999-2001**

**Please attach the institution's official NCAA graduation-rates report (institution's two-page report) for the three most recent academic years for which this information is available.**

American University's official NCAA graduation-rates reports for Academic Year 1998-1999, 1999-2000, and 2000-2001 are attached.

### **Self-Study Item 2.1.7 – Trends or Changes in Graduation Rates**

**Review the graduation rates for student-athletes who received athletics grants-in-aid, various student-athlete subgroups, and for students generally during the last three years, and comment on any significant trends or significant changes.**

The graduation rates as reported to the NCAA in the past three years are as follows:

<u>Year Entering</u>	<u>Year Graduating</u>	<u>All Students</u>	<u>Student-Athletes</u>
1992-1993	1999	67%	87%
1993-1994	2000	69%	46%
1994-1995	2001	70%	75%

In 1997, the department of athletics and the department of learning services (as of 2001, the academic support center) implemented an academic support program for all student-athletes. Since then, the rate of graduation for scholarship athletes and other subgroups has exceeded the rate for the student body of the university as a whole. The only significant change occurred in the graduating year 2000 when the graduation rate fell to 46%. This change occurred because the annual sample of student-athletes included in calculating the average was (and usually is) so small that any student-athlete who chooses to transfer or fails to complete a degree, even if it is only one person, significantly changes the graduation rate. For example, if 100 student-athletes entered as freshmen and, over the course of a standard four-year college period, ten students transferred, 20 students required a fifth year to complete their degree, and two flunked out, the graduation rate would be only 68% even though only 2 students failed to complete their degree during their college career.

### **Self-Study Item 2.1.8 – Institution-Set Graduation Goals for Student-Athletes**

**Describe the specific goal(s) that your institution has set for graduation of students generally and for graduation of student-athletes.**

The university does not have specific written graduation rate goals for students as a whole or specifically for athletes. Student-athletes are expected to graduate at a rate that is similar to that of other students. For example, in 2001, the graduation rate for all AU students was 70%, and the graduation rate for the student-athlete portion of the AU undergraduate student body was 75%.

## **Self-Study Item 2.1.9 – Academic Standards and Policies**

**Please attach academic standards and policies contained in the university’s catalog/bulletin, athletics department manual, student-athlete handbook and/or institutional handbook for students. Describe exceptions, if any, to the institution’s regular academic standards and policies applicable to the general student body (e.g., good academic standing, definition of minimum full-time status) that are available to student-athletes:**

1. Academic Regulations, 15.00.03 Athletic Policies, Eligibility, includes:

In order to be eligible to participate in intercollegiate athletics at American University a student must meet the requirements and abide by the regulations of the university, the faculty, the National Collegiate Athletic Association and the Patriot League, and any other appropriate conferences or organizations of which the university may choose to become a member. The most pertinent regulations are herein summarized:

- a. A student must be enrolled at the university as a full-time undergraduate student.
  - b. A graduate student may also compete provided he or she has met all of the NCAA requirements as stated in Bylaw, Article 14, for graduate student competition.
  - c. To be eligible to participate in intercollegiate athletics a full-time undergraduate student must maintain normal progress toward graduation as defined by the school or college in which he or she is enrolled. It is expected that as of the fall semester of his or her sophomore year a student-athlete will maintain a cumulative average of 2.0 for participation in college athletics with the understanding that a student may complete the season of any intercollegiate sport in which he or she is participating at the time he or she falls below a 2.0 cumulative average. A student-athlete falling below a 2.0 but making normal progress may be certified eligible by the Committee on Athletics.
  - d. It will be the responsibility of the Director of Athletics to keep informed of the academic performance of students participating in intercollegiate athletics. The Assistant Athletic Director for Compliance will certify the eligibility of all student-athletes to the Committee on Athletics in writing at the beginning of each semester. This certification will include access to all appropriate NCAA eligibility forms.
  - e. Graduates from junior or community colleges shall be immediately eligible provided that they have met the requirements of the admissions office and all appropriate NCAA regulations regarding transfer. (Bylaw, Article 14)
2. American University Catalog 2001-2002, Academic Regulations and Standards, pg.16:

The undergraduate student admitted to and enrolled in a degree program usually registers for 15 credit hours each semester so that the required minimum of 120 credit hours for the bachelor's degree is completed in four years.

In any given semester, a student may carry a minimum of 12 credit hours and be classified and certified (for veteran's benefits, financial aid, etc.) as full-time for that semester. The additional credit hours must be made up through summer enrollment or by an overload (if approved by the dean) in another semester in order to maintain normal annual progress toward the degree, as is often required by the regulations of government agencies. Students are urged to become familiar with such regulations. A total of 19 credit hours is the maximum load permitted without special approval.

An undergraduate student wishing to register for more than 19 credit hours in a semester is required to have the approval of the academic advisor and the appropriate dean. The approval is for the overload, not permission for a specific course. A per-credit-hour tuition fee is assessed, in addition to the full-time tuition fee, for registered credit hours over seventeen.

3. American University Catalog 2001-2002, Academic Regulations and Standards, pg. 25.00.09:

### **Absence of Students**

The university expects students to attend all classes and to arrive on time. In establishing attendance policies, faculty members may not penalize students for absences resulting from circumstances beyond the students' control, such as illness, accident, religious observance, or representing the university at athletics or other off-campus activities. Faculty members may require reasonable documentation in support of a student's request to be excused from class and may set reasonable dates by which missed work must be submitted. If a student's absences are so frequent, such as during a prolonged illness, as to make satisfactory progress in a class unlikely, a faculty member may recommend that a student drop the course under the regulations covering changes in registration. (See 75.00.06.A.2.a-b)

### **Self-Study Item 2.2.1. -- Institutional Organization**

**Identify, using an organizational or flow chart, how the institution is organized to provide academic support and advising services to student-athletes (i.e., reporting lines and identification of who does what).**

The coordinator of the Academic Support Program (ASP) for student-athletes and his or her assistant provide academic support to all student-athletes and assist with academic advising as it relates to eligibility.

The coordinator reports to the director of the academic support center and is a member of that team of professionals. The academic support center reports to the dean of students and is one of the offices under the vice president of campus life (formerly student services).

The coordinator also has an indirect reporting line to the associate director of athletics, is housed in that unit, and has served on the management team in athletics. The AD reports to the vice president of development.

In terms of academic advising, students work with assigned advisors in their schools and colleges, who follow students through a plan for completion of degree requirements. The coordinator collaborates regularly with each of the assigned advisors to ensure that students meet both graduation and eligibility requirements. Academic advisors report through their academic deans to the provost.

### **Self-study Item 2.2.2. a-d – Academic Support**

**Using the following program areas for academic support issues as examples, please describe:**

#### **a. The specific academic support services offered to student-athletes (if any)**

##### **Academic Advising**

American University requires that all students meet with their academic advisors in their schools and colleges at least once a semester. Academic advisors assist students in obtaining a well-balanced education and in interpreting university policies and procedures. Each of the five schools and colleges has an advisor who acts as a liaison to the department of athletics and is responsible for the initial contact with all student-athletes. The designated advisors are responsible for providing assistance with the following: class selection, class scheduling, priority registration, monitoring the completion of degree and university requirements, and monitoring continuing eligibility. Students are responsible for selecting courses, meeting course prerequisites, and adhering to university policies and procedures.

In addition, all student-athletes have access to the academic support program (ASP) in the department of athletics. The ASP is designed to support student-athletes as they complete their academic degrees and maintain athletics eligibility. The ASP helps student-athletes make informed decisions and utilize campus resources. In this role, the ASP frequently acts as a consultant to the process of academic advising by providing support for priority registration, reminding student-athletes of important dates, keeping academic advisors informed of practice

schedules to avoid scheduling conflicts, aiding student-athletes in reviewing the schedule of classes, and arranging for special academic major and group advising workshops. In addition, the ASP staff is responsible for monitoring the academic progress of student-athletes throughout the semester, the completion of degree and university requirements, and initial and continuing eligibility.

## **Tutoring**

Course content tutors are available on request by any student-athlete. There are no restrictions to the number of hours or tutors available to each student-athlete.

Student-athletes requesting tutors contact the coordinator of the ASP who provides names and telephone numbers of peer tutors in that subject area. The coordinator relies primarily on the current list of tutors from tutoring services in the academic support center, a service available to all AU students. The tutoring services coordinator screens tutors for expertise and provides tutor training. The ASP coordinator in athletics documents all requests for record keeping in the academic support center. To obtain a tutor, student-athletes call potential tutors and arrange to meet the tutor of their choice at a convenient time.

After tutors conduct sessions with student-athletes, they turn in a tutor payment form to the ASP coordinator for verification of hours. The business office in athletics processes payment. Tutors for student-athletes are paid at the same rate as for all other students, currently \$10/hour for undergraduate tutors and \$12/hour for graduate tutors.

## **Success Skills**

The ASP offers programs and services to all student-athletes to help in the development of learning skills necessary to succeed in college. Services include individual instruction in time management, organizational skills, textbook reading, note taking, exam preparation, study strategies, and general writing assistance. The ASP staff works closely with faculty and staff in the academic units, facilitating communication and understanding of the academic needs of student-athletes. When appropriate, student-athletes are referred to other university resources (e.g., professors, teaching assistants, the writing center, the mathematics and statistics tutoring lab, the academic support center, tutoring services, etc.). Students may also take advantage of study skills workshops offered by the academic support center and supplemental instruction in selected courses.

## **Study Hall**

All first-year and transfer student-athletes are required to attend study hall during their first semester at American University. Thereafter, all second-semester and upper-class student-athletes who maintain a 2.50 cumulative GPA (on a 4.00 scale) are exempt from participating in study hall. Coaches, however, may require team members to attend study hall during any

semester regardless of student-athletes' GPAs, if they feel that the supervised period of study will be in the student-athletes' best interest.

Proctors who also serve as tutors staff the study hall. These individuals are employed by the department of athletics and are responsible for monitoring student-athletes during study sessions and enforcing study hall rules. A proctor and a general tutor staff the men's basketball study hall.

Student-athletes are required to attend eight hours of study hall per week. Coaches receive a study hall tally form each Monday indicating the attendance of their student-athletes from the following week. Coaches are responsible for handling violations of the attendance policy.

### **Freshman/Transfer Orientation**

New student programs designs and coordinates orientation programs for first-year and transfer students. Through summer, fall, and spring orientation programs, the staff assists new students in their transition to American University. The ASP holds open houses during orientations to answer questions of incoming students.

The TALONS (**T**hinking **A**nd **L**earning **O**pportunities for **N**ew **S**tudent-Athletes) workshop series offered by the ASP serves as the freshman and transfer orientation program for student-athletes at American University and provides an introduction to university resources. The series is facilitated by both academic and life skills counselors striving to help first-year and transfer student-athletes understand and cope with the academic, social, athletics, and personal pressures during the transition to AU. Videos, guest speakers, and other supporting materials enhance the workshop offerings. The goal of the series is to provide new student-athletes with information and practical strategies for adjusting to the increased demands and pressures of intercollegiate academics; adapting to the requirements of competitive NCAA Division I athletics; developing a supportive network of peers and advisors; becoming involved in university life; choosing a major; and exploring career interests.

All first-year and transfer student-athletes are required to attend a total of eight TALONS workshops provided during the fall and spring semesters. Attendance is mandatory. Coaches are responsible for handling violations of the attendance policy.

### **Academic Progress Monitoring and Reporting**

ASP progress reports are delivered to professors for feedback on the academic performance of every student-athlete twice a semester: prior to the midterm period (weeks 3-5) and prior to final exams (weeks 11-13). Professors are asked to comment on the students' academic progress in the course, the number of days absent from class, and the grade to date.

When progress reports are returned to the ASP, copies are given to the designated coaches. In response to professor feedback, the ASP staff hold individual meetings with any student-athlete receiving a grade of C- or below on any progress report. At that meeting, an academic plan of action is established. This plan may involve tutoring, guided study (e.g., meetings with an ASP counselor), or referrals to other campus resources.

Approximately 60% of the progress reports sent to professors are returned to the ASP. The ASP contacts any professor who has not returned a progress report. By this process of using both progress reports and follow-up telephone calls, progress information for almost all student-athletes is successfully obtained.

In addition, student-athletes receiving university early warning notices are required to meet weekly with an ASP counselor for guided study. This information is shared with designated coaches, as well.

The ASP is currently designing an online progress report to replace the paper version presently used. Online reports are expected to be in place in AY '02-'03.

### **Assistance for special academic needs**

Student-athletes with documented or suspected learning disabilities or attention deficit disorder are referred to the academic support center where support services are available to all students with learning disabilities. If the student-athlete provides current and appropriate documentation of a disability to an academic support counselor, then accommodations will be discussed and provided on the student's request. If the disability is suspected or documentation is unavailable, the academic support counselor can conduct a screening interview and help the student make an informed decision about whether to proceed with an assessment. Referrals for such an assessment would be made to community resources, as they are for all AU students. Academic support center services can include individual counseling for compensatory study strategies, whether or not there is currently a documented disability.

Student-athletes with documentation of physical or psychological disabilities are referred to disability support services, which assist in providing appropriate accommodations, as needed.

### **Learning Assessments**

Since American University does not offer remedial coursework, most students are only required to take a placement examination to determine the appropriate course for meeting the university mathematics requirement. Students who do not place into Finite Mathematics, the requirement for graduation, must first take MATH-022 Basic Algebra or prepare in an alternative way for the Finite Mathematics course. Basic Algebra is a non-credit course that

does not fulfill the mathematics requirement. Credit equivalent is listed for the purpose of determining full-time student status.

Students whose first language is not English are required to take the TOEFL exam before enrolling in courses at American University. With the university having announced changes in the English Language Institute program after spring 2003, this proficiency will be met in other ways.

Students taking a foreign language course as an elective or to complete the degree requirements in the School of International Services must take a placement examination offered by the Department of Language and Foreign Studies.

Student-athletes take any of these placement exams with the general student population during orientation; however, exceptions can be made when athletics competition or practice times interfere with scheduled testing.

## **Mentoring**

The EAGLES (**E**nhancing **A**cademic **G**oals & **L**earning **E**xperiences for **S**tudent-Athletes) peer mentoring program is designed to aid first-year and new transfer student-athletes in their adjustment to the demands of both intercollegiate athletics and university academics by formal and informal gatherings with upper-class student-athletes. Newcomers to American University and mentors are matched according to academic interests rather than team affiliation. The goal of this match is to give freshman and transfer student-athletes the opportunity to meet upper-class student-athletes who share similar goals and experiences academically. Through the mentor program, new students are able to work with their mentors to develop personal strategies for success.

This program has formally existed since 1998-1999. In the years 1999 and 2000, the peer mentoring program struggled with reduced interest on the part of student-athletes. Currently, new student-athletes informally pair with upper-class student-athletes who share similar majors and career objectives.

## **Assistance for at-risk students**

The ASP offers a proactive monitoring program, guided study, which focuses on students who may confront a variety of academic challenges. The guided study program involves one or two meetings each week (for approximately 30 minutes per meeting) during the 15-week semester with either the coordinator or the counselor of the ASP in order to monitor academic needs and aid in the development of study skills. In these meetings, students receive individual instruction in time management, organizational skills, textbook reading, note taking, exam preparation, study strategies, and general writing assistance. Incoming freshman student-athletes with a high school GPA below a 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale) and/or an SAT score below 1000 and any upper-class student-athlete with a cumulative GPA below a 2.50 (on a 4.00 scale) are required to participate in guided study.

Student-athletes who are not making adequate academic progress despite apparent efforts to succeed and use available resources may receive more intensive tutoring with support from the department of athletics. If a learning disability is suspected, a student-athlete may be referred to the academic support center for an educational screening, and referrals could be made for a more complete evaluation off-campus.

## **Post-eligibility programs**

Services provided by the ASP are available to all student-athletes who have completed their eligibility. These services remain available until student-athletes are granted their degrees.

American University provides athletics scholarships to student-athletes on a year-by-year basis, not to exceed four years. Any provisions concerning post-eligibility scholarships are determined on a case-by-case basis.

### **b. Any policies that govern which students can use these services:**

The services provided by the ASP for student-athletes are available to all students.

### **c. The mechanism by which student-athletes are made aware of these services:**

The ASP staff, coaches, and administrators are responsible for making student-athletes aware of the services provided by the ASP. The introduction to the ASP services occurs during recruiting visits, in which prospective student-athletes meet for an informational session with ASP staff members. Services provided by the ASP are also explained in detail during orientation sessions provided for new student-athletes prior to the beginning of the academic year. A detailed listing and explanation of academic support services is provided in the Student-Athlete Handbook, which is distributed to all new and returning student-athletes at the

beginning of every year. The handbook is revised annually to reflect any changes in policies or procedures. In addition, advertisement of ASP services occurs throughout the academic year by posting signs outside the student-athlete locker room areas, by sending e-mail announcements to student-athletes, and by providing coaches with a detailed listing of all ASP services available.

**d. The mechanism for periodic review and approval by academic authorities outside athletics of these services:**

The ASP for student-athletes is a component of the academic support center in the Office of Campus Life, with the ASP coordinator housed in the department of athletics. The coordinator of the ASP reports to the director of the academic support center who in turn reports to the dean of students and the vice president of campus life. This reporting line allows for independent monitoring of service provisions to student-athletes, professional development in the field of academic support, and program development with the support of campus life offices. The faculty senate committee on athletics (now the student life committee) also monitors the academic progress of student-athletes.

**Self-Study Items 2.3.1. – Scheduling of Athletic Competitions and Practices**

**Attach the institution's written policies related to scheduling of intercollegiate athletic competitions and practices and describe how they minimize interference with class time and examination periods.**

*Academic Regulations, 15.00.03 Athletic Policies, Scheduling* includes:

Sports schedules are compiled by the coaching staff with the advice and consent of the Director of Athletics. Every attempt will be made to schedule competitive events with institutions that have comparable principles, academic programs, and standards of competition. Only in exceptional circumstances will competitive events be scheduled off-campus during final exam periods. All schedules must conform to the minimums and maximums as stated in *NCAA Bylaws, Article 17*.

Every effort is made to minimize the number of classes missed by student-athletes. When formulating a team schedule, the number of class absences is strongly taken into consideration before any games are scheduled. When student-athletes must leave campus for several days, they are required to make prior arrangements when they will be absent from class, and faculty members are encouraged to provide the opportunity for student-athletes to make up assignments that are missed.

Patriot League principles and policies dictate that concerns for student-athlete academic welfare will always be paramount in designing athletic schedules and resolving scheduling conflicts. Care will be exercised to minimize time missed from academic obligations due to athletic participation and sensitivity to student-athlete academic welfare shall be the obvious priority in all scheduling and/or travel decisions.

Following are the scheduling guidelines prescribed by the Patriot League:

- a. Awareness of a member institution's final examination period shall normally preclude any scheduling of competition within twenty-four hours of such periods.
- b. Under normal circumstances, no class time shall be missed for practice activities except when a team is traveling to an away-from-home contest, and the practice is in conjunction with the contest.
- c. Normally, daylight permitting, weekday athletic contests will not start prior to 3:00 pm.
- d. Scheduling will normally require student-athletes to miss no more than one day of classes per away athletic contest, and less whenever possible.
- e. Every effort will be made to limit, in original scheduling, the number of mid-week (Monday – Thursday) away contests scheduled per week in any sport to one.
- f. Whenever possible and reasonable, departure for a contest on a subsequent day shall not be prior to the end of that day's classes.
- g. Teams will normally return to campus following athletic competition.
- h. League competition will be given priority in establishing and refining athletic schedules, wherever possible.
- i. Exceptions will be made under established institutional policy.

### **Self-Study Item 2.3.2 – Monitoring Missed Class Time**

**Describe the procedures used by the institution to monitor missed class time for student-athletes.**

The ASP takes a proactive approach to informing professors about missed class time due to competition schedules. At the beginning of each semester, an official excusal letter and travel card (to be signed by each professor upon receipt of the excusal letter) is provided for

each student-athlete to deliver to his/her professors. The excusal letter provides the following information: departure date and time, competition date and time, and the competition location. Upon receipt of the excusal letter, each professor signs the travel card, verifying that he/she is aware of the number of classes that each student-athlete will miss due to athletics competition. If a professor deems the number of absences to be excessive for that semester, then the student-athlete has the option of enrolling in another section of that class or taking that same class during his/her "off-season."

In addition, student-athlete class attendance is monitored through ASP progress reports, which are delivered to professors twice a semester: prior to the midterm period (weeks 3-5) and prior to final exams (weeks 11-13). Professors are asked to comment on the students' academic progress in the course, the number of excused and unexcused absences from class, and the grade to date.

### **Self-Study Item 2.3.3—Significant or Excess Missed Class Time**

**Analyze, explain and address missed class time that has been determined by the institution to be significant or excessive for any sport(s).**

American University considers class attendance a matter best left to the discretion of the individual instructor. It is expected, however, that faculty members who have a particular attendance policy will announce that policy at the first few class meetings each semester. Athletics schedules are compiled by the coaching staff with the advice and consent of the AD. Every effort is made to minimize the number of classes missed by student-athletes. When formulating a team schedule, the number of class absences is strongly considered before any games are scheduled. When student-athletes must leave campus for several days, they are required to make prior arrangements when they will be absent from class, and faculty members are encouraged to provide the opportunity for student-athletes to make up assignments that are missed. Only in exceptional circumstances are competitive events scheduled off-campus during final exam periods. Missed classes during finals require approval of both the vice president of development and the university provost.

Through priority registration, student-athletes, as well as certain other students (e.g., resident assistants, students with disabilities), are allowed to register early for their courses. This enables student-athletes to schedule classes around practice times and minimizes absences from classes due to athletics contests. Student-athletes are not permitted to miss classes to attend practice.

To this point, the athletics department has not received complaints regarding excessive absences by any sport or its athletes.