

2003 NCAA Academic Reform Legislation

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The NCAA recently adopted legislation collectively referred to as Phase I of an “academic reform package.” The package includes more stringent requirements for continuing eligibility of enrolled student-athletes. For the first time, NCAA procedures shift some dimensions of continuing eligibility certification from an annual review to an academic semester basis. Student-athletes are now subject to two components of continuing eligibility: academic semester eligibility (semester credits earned) and annual eligibility (progress towards degree and grade point average). Presented below, in summary format, are highlights of Phase I. [Legislation Effective: August 1, 2003]

I. Academic Semester Eligibility

MSU has two regular academic semesters: Fall semester and Spring semester. For the purposes of NCAA academic semester eligibility certification, summer semester is not considered. To be certified eligible for competition, a student-athlete must:

- a. enroll in at least twelve (12) credits each regular academic semester (Fall and Spring)
- b. earn at least six (6) credits in the preceding regular academic semester (Fall and Spring)
- c. earn at least eighteen (18) credits in two consecutive regular academic semesters (Fall/Spring or Spring/Fall)

It is important to note that although summer credits do not count toward academic semester eligibility, they are included in annual eligibility determination.

Semester Eligibility Scenarios

Consider the following two scenarios:

1. A student-athlete earns 5 credits Fall 2003, 13 credits Spring 2004, and 7 credits Summer 2004...will the student-athlete be eligible for competition Fall 2004?

2. A student-athlete earns 13 credits Fall 2003, 5 credits Spring 2004, and 7 credits Summer 2004...will the student-athlete be eligible for competition Fall 2004?

Resolution:

- 1. YES....since the S-A earned at least 6 credits in the regular academic semester immediately prior to certification and 18 credits in two successive regular academic semesters and at least 24 credits during the calendar year the S-A will be certified eligible.**
 - 2. NO....since the S-A did not earn at least 6 credits in the regular academic semester immediately prior to certification the S-A will not be certified eligible.**
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II. Annual Eligibility

At the end of each calendar year (including academic semesters and summer semester), quantitative and qualitative requirements are specified for continuing eligibility. Quantitative requirements involve progress towards degree certification based on credits earned in a degree-granting program. To be certified eligible for competition, a student-athlete enrolled in a 120-credit degree program must:

- b. earn at least twenty-four (24) credits prior to beginning the second year of enrollment (20% of 120 credits)**
- c. earn at least forty-eight (48) credits prior to beginning the third year of enrollment (40% of 120 credits)**
- d. earn at least seventy-two (72) credits prior to beginning the fourth year of enrollment (60% of 120 credits)**
- e. earn at least ninety-six (96) credits prior to the beginning of the fifth year of enrollment (80% of 120 credits)**

Qualitative requirements involve grade point average (gpa) standards based on credits earned. To be certified eligible for competition, a student-athlete must:

- a] earn a 1.80 gpa prior to beginning the second year of enrollment (90% of 2.00 gpa)**

- b] earn a 2.00 gpa prior to beginning the third year of enrollment (100% of 2.00 gpa)
- c] earn a 2.00 gpa prior to beginning the fourth year of enrollment (100% of 2.00 gpa)
- d] earn a 2.00 gpa prior to beginning the fifth year of enrollment (100% of 2.00 gpa)

Comparative Charts

Since annual certification is not new, comparisons of current Big Ten standards and proposed NCAA legislation are provided.

Quantitative Requirements:

<u>Entering</u>	<u>Big Ten 14.4.3.1</u>	<u>Proposed NCAA</u>
Second Year	24 credits (20.0%)	24 credits (20%)
Third Year	51 credits (42.5%)	48 credits (40%)
Fourth Year	78 credits (65.0%)	72 credits (60%)
Fifth Year	105 credits (87.5%)	96 credits (80%)

Qualitative Requirements:

<u>Entering</u>	<u>Big Ten 14.4.3.3</u>	<u>Proposed NCAA</u>
Second Year	1.8 gpa	1.8 gpa
Third Year	1.9 gpa	2.0 gpa
Fourth Year	2.0 gpa	2.0 gpa
Fifth Year	2.0 gpa	2.0 gpa

Coming Soon...Phase II – the next phase of the academic reform package will focus on academic incentives and disincentives.