

August 07th, 2017 College, College Recruiting

Michelle Lombana is committed to helping parents like her whose children want to swim in college by simplifying the recruiting process through <http://www.collegeswimmingguide.com/>. Check out her summary of *NCAA Recruiting Rules* and *NCAA Calendar* for helpful dates.

When swimmers (and parents!) think of college scholarships, they typically think of athletic scholarships. However, there are actually several different types of scholarships and availability varies by college and depends on the school's Division since **NCAA Divisions, NJCAA and NAIA have different rules regarding scholarships**.

This information isn't readily available at most schools, partially because coaches try to put together packages that include different types of scholarships to attract recruits. So a discussion of the different types that can be offered is helpful.

Athletic Swimming Scholarships

The maximum number of swimming scholarships allowed per Division is listed below.

NCAA Division I women 14 men 9.9

NCAA Division II women 8.1 men 8.1

NCAA Division III no athletic scholarships

NAIA women 8 men 8

NJCAA women 15 men 15

Some schools don't have enough money in the athletic budget to fund the maximum number of scholarships allowed. Other schools choose not to offer athletic scholarships even though they're allowed to – Ivy League schools are an example of this. If a program offers the maximum number of scholarships allowed, they're "fully funded." Many programs are partially funded so they offer some scholarships, but not the maximum permitted by the **NCAA**.

It's uncommon to be offered a full ride as coaches often prefer to divide up swimming scholarships and offer them to a larger number of swimmers. Swimming is an "equivalency sport" so coaches may divide the scholarships between as many athletes as they wish. If they have five funded scholarships for men, they can offer a full ride to five men, a half scholarship to ten men, a quarter scholarship to twenty men or some combination thereof.

The number of swimming scholarships available to offer to incoming freshmen can vary from year to year. For example, if a school has a total of 12 scholarships for women, they would ideally have three to offer each year if spread evenly. However, there may have been a year where they offered fewer scholarships, or more scholarships, so what's available will ultimately depend on the number of scholarships being opened up by graduating swimmers.

Academic

Academic scholarships are dependent upon grades and vary by school. Some schools have a formula and post the requirements on their web site. For example, if you have a 3.5 GPA and a 1320 (new) SAT score, you may qualify for a certain scholarship.

Look at where you fall in relation to average test scores. If you have a 26 ACT and the midrange is 27-30, you're unlikely to qualify for any academic scholarships. If you have a 31 ACT with the same midrange, you'll be more competitive at that school and be much more likely to qualify.

Leadership and Service

Many schools offer scholarships for leadership and service and automatically evaluate your application when they apply.

Often a college coach will ask for an early read from Admissions and Financial Aid to be sure the athlete will be admitted and to see if they're likely to qualify for any scholarships. There's no point in a coach and swimmer wasting each other's time if it's doubtful that the swimmer will be accepted.

It's important for swimmers to **be involved in leadership and service activities** outside of swimming to help them qualify for scholarships. This can be difficult to juggle with the rigorous schedule of a swimmer but there are **some extracurricular activities that work well for swimmers**.

Need-Based Financial Aid

Need-based financial aid depends on your family's situation. In order to get an approximate idea of the amount your family will be expected to contribute toward your education, go to FAFSA4caster and input your personal information. It will calculate an Expected Contribution (EC) toward the annual cost of attendance. The Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) web site has more information explaining financial aid.

Coaches will usually try to find as many sources of scholarships within the school as they can if they're really interested in a swimmer. The amount of money available varies between schools and even year to year.

Most teams are made up of a combination of athletes on scholarship and not on scholarship. The majority of swimmers who earn scholarships end up with a package that includes different types of scholarships. All athletes on the team receive the same perks in terms of athletic apparel, tutoring, study halls, and early class registration, regardless of whether they have swimming scholarships or not.

Swimmers should keep their grades up and participate in extracurricular activities in order to qualify for the schools that are of interest, and the scholarships that are offered.

About **College Swimming Guide**

*College Swimming Guide simplifies the process of being recruited to swim in college by providing sample emails to coaches, lists of questions to ask coaches, and spreadsheets of colleges and conference championship times to see where your swimmer fits. We also have lots of information available, such as **checklists**, **NCAA Rules Summary**, **NCAA Calendar** and more. We'll walk you through the process and let you know what to do and when to do it.*