

## Collegiate Recruiting Information

The following information comes in part from a June 6, 2018, USA Swimming hosted webinar with Ann Goodman James, Head Men's and Women's Swimming Coach at Colorado College. Ann has coached at all three NCAA division levels. She swam at Texas Tech University, and also has a daughter who has gone through the recruiting process, so she has insight as a coach, parent, and athlete. Other sources include the NCAA, NAIA, NJCAA, and CCAA websites.

If you want to swim in college, there is a place for you to do that. It might take some research on your part, but there is a place for you.

### Communication

1. Reach out to schools you're interested in. Don't wait for coaches to contact you. There are several thousand recruits and just a few coaches at any college. Help them find you by filling out the recruiting questionnaire on the school swimming & diving website and emailing the coach to tell him or her a bit about yourself and to let them know you're interested in their school and program.
2. Return all emails and calls. Even though student-athletes don't use email much to communicate anymore, this is how most college coaches and admissions offices communicate with you. You will have to get in the habit of checking and responding to emails regularly. Checking and responding once every 24 hours is a good rule of thumb.
3. Be honest about your level of interest in the school. It's okay to tell the coach no, but they do like to know why. This can be difficult especially if you've built a relationship with them over several months or years, but coaches appreciate knowing that they're out of the running as soon as you know that they're out of the running. It frees up their limited time to pursue other athletes who are still interested in their program. They may be disappointed, but they understand that you can only pick one college and being turned down by athletes they like is part of the process.
4. Don't pay for a recruiting service. Use the free option on sites like NCSA or use the free or low-cost option (currently \$19.99) on collegeswimming.com. Don't pay for the personal recruiting coordinator. Coaches would rather hear from you directly than a third party.
5. Athletes need to email coaches, not their parents. Coaches question the athlete's interest when a parent emails the coach instead of the athlete. An abundance of parent emails might turn the coach off of that athlete. Parents need to have a supporting and not a lead role.
6. During campus visits, athletes also need to take the lead answering and asking questions. When parents answer questions for their athlete, college coaches can question the athlete's readiness to be in college on their own.

### Selection

1. Consider the academic match as well as the athletic match. Make sure the school has all of the criteria you're looking for. First and foremost, you are there to get an education. Make sure it's a place you want to spend at least your next four years.

2. Consider all of the NCAA divisions and NAIA.

	<b>NCAA Division I</b>	<b>NCAA Division II</b>	<b>NCAA Division III</b>	<b>NAIA</b>	<b>CCCAA</b>
<b>Example Schools</b>	UCLA, USC, CSUF	Cal Baptist, Grand Canyon (AZ)	Redlands, Cal Lutheran, UCSC	Soka, Marymount U	Saddleback, Golden West
<b># of Schools</b>	347	302	451	250	
<b># of Women's Swimming &amp; Diving Teams</b>	196	96	221	35	
<b># of Men's Swimming &amp; Diving Teams</b>	134	71	221	28	
<b>NCAA Eligibility Center Registration</b>	Required	Required	Optional	No	No
<b>NAIA Eligibility Center Registration</b>	No	No	No	Required	No
<b>Athletic Scholarships</b>	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
<b>Academic Scholarships</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Need Based Scholarships</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>NCAA/NAIA Scholarship Limits</b>	14 for women, 9.9 for men	8.1 for women and men	0 for women and men	8 for women and men	
<b>Athletic Budgets</b>	Large	Moderate	Small	Small	Small
<b>% Athletes in Student Body</b>	6%	14%	20%	15%	

3. Be realistic about where you would fin in on a team, in that team's conference, and in that team's division.
4. Consider your ability to make the travel team, be on a relay, score at the conference or NCAA championship. Each conference has different rules about how many athletes can travel. This is a great question to ask the college coach.

5. Go somewhere where you can swim faster or dive better. Research time and score improvement. This information is often available on the school's website. You may have to look at results across multiple seasons to determine this.

Research the team culture. Ask the coach and athletes questions. Don't ask the coach anything you can research for yourself and do your research on the college and the team before you contact the coach. Being knowledgeable will help show that you're sincerely interested. Here are some example questions to ask.

- What percentage of athletes stay with the program all four years?
- How do the athletes get along with each other?
- How does the coach treat you after you swim a slow race?
- How does the coach treat you after the team loses a meet?
- What does it take to get good grades and perform well athletically here?
- Are there any foreseeable issues with balancing my intended major with the team expectations?

### **Finances**

It's okay to walk onto a team. A "walk on" is an athlete that doesn't receive athletic scholarship money their first year. Each team likely has many several walk ons. Only about 3% of high school swimmers receive a college athletic scholarship. The average athletic scholarship awarded is covers about 40% of the costs of college. Full scholarships in swimming and diving are very rare. Athletic scholarship money can be supplemented with academic scholarship money. However, be sure to inform the college coach if you're awarded any scholarship money that is based all or in part on your athletic accomplishments. Depending on how fully funded the school's athletic scholarships are, you may or may not be able to accept both an athletic scholarship from the school and an outside scholarship that is at least partly based on your athletic performance. Outside awards based on athletic performance count toward a school's scholarship limit set by the NCAA

### **Campus Visits**

You are allowed 5 official visits if you are visiting at least one NCAA Division I school. An official visit is a visit where the school pays for some aspect of your visit. This includes staying overnight on campus. Even though you don't receive money, the NCAA places a monetary value on your night's lodging. Only take official visits to schools you are truly interested in attending. You do not need to use all 5 visits if you don't need them. Do not waste your, your parents' and the school's money visiting a school you don't want to attend.

You can have unlimited NCAA Division II and III official visits only if you are not officially visiting any Division I schools. You can also have unlimited unofficial visits across all NCAA divisions.

Do not drink, use drugs, or do anything illegal on your recruiting trip, even if the students who are showing you around do. Just as you are evaluating the college, the college is evaluating you. You may be shown around by a senior who can legally drink who takes you to a party where there is drinking. You, as a high school student, are not of legal drinking age. Doing anything illegal or unseemly on your recruiting trip can end your hopes of being on the team at that school.

### **Advantages to Swimming or Diving in College**

Companies love to hire student-athletes, especially those who competed all four years of college because the skills, commitment, and work ethic are shown to transfer into the work environment.

College athletes get better grades and have more access to resources and benefits than their non-athlete peers. These resources and benefits include: tutors, priority scheduling, career and resume development, an instant peer group, and adjustment to college life. They can also include priority housing, free medical care, and training table (better and healthier food options).

**NCAA Recruiting Contact Rules**

	<b>Official Visits</b>	<b>Phone Calls*</b>	<b>Email/Text</b>	<b>Off-Campus Contact**</b>
<b>NCAA Division I</b>	After Sept. 1 of junior year	After July 1 after junior year	After Sept. 1 of junior year	After July 1 after junior year
<b>NCAA Division II</b>	After June 15 before junior year			
<b>NCAA Division III</b>	After January 1 of junior year	No restrictions	No restrictions	After completion of sophomore year
<b>NAIA</b>	No restrictions	No restrictions	No restrictions	No restrictions
<b>CCAA</b>	No restrictions within recruiting area			

\*An athlete can call a coach at any time. However, if the coach does not answer the phone, the coach cannot return the phone call before the date that the coach is allowed to call.

\*\*College coaches are never allowed to contact an athlete during a competition. They may talk to an athlete at a competition after the entire competition is completed and the coach of the athlete during that competition has released the athlete.