



BRIDGEWATER STATE UNIVERSITY

Family Guide for Athletics 2024-2025

Competing in intercollegiate athletics is a big step for any student-athlete. The commitment is far greater than high school or club and the expectations are raised, both for athletics ability as well as the responsibility for self-advocacy. The expectations for our families are raised as well. We emphasize good sportsmanship and support for our teams through **LOUD, PROUD** and **POSITIVE** ways.

This guide has been created to help answer some of those questions that may come up throughout the year. Please refer to it throughout the next few years as a handy reference guide that may answer the questions you have. Of course, there will be other questions or issues that arise that this guide does not cover. Please feel free to have your son/daughter reach out to anyone in the athletic office for further support and guidance.

Thank you for your continued support of the BSU athletic program, and remember, every day is a great day to be a Bear!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Marybeth Lamb'.

Dr. Marybeth Lamb

Sr. Associate Vice President for Student Life and Athletics

GENERAL INFORMATION

What is the website for BSU Athletics and Recreation?

You can find all the latest news and information for Athletics, Recreation, Intramurals and Club Sports at www.bsubears.com.

How do I contact the coach of my student's team?

The BSU coaching staff has both full-time and part-time staff. Most part-time coaches may only be on campus for practice and games during the regular academic year. If your student-athlete has questions or concerns about their participation or the team it is recommended that parents encourage their student to speak to their coach. The best way for student-athletes to contact their coach is through the ARMS communication platform to set up a time with them during practice.

If a student was recruited to play an intercollegiate sport, can they still be cut?

Due to budget and team management considerations, every team has a limit on their roster size. Depending on the number of student-athletes trying out for the team, including returners and new students, “cuts” may be made to the team roster. Unfortunately, this might include student-athletes who have been recruited to compete on the team. Cuts are only made after prospective student athletes have had at least two opportunities to practice and demonstrate their skill level.

GAMES, MEETS & MATCHES

Do I have to buy tickets to the games?

Tickets are required for football and men’s / women’s basketball games. Students are admitted free. Also, in the event BSU is hosting a MASCAC or NCAA post-season game, tickets will be sold for all games. Tickets should be purchased in advance by clicking the link:

https://bsu6.glitnirticketing.com/bsuticket/cms/view.php?id=tile_BSUtix1840 or visit bsubears.com website.

Where should we sit during home games, matches or meets?

There is plenty of spectator seating provided at each home venue, including Mazzaferro Field at the Swenson Athletic Complex (Field Hockey, Football, Lacrosse, Soccer and Track & Field), the Tinsley Center (Basketball, Wrestling and Volleyball), Kelly Gym (Wrestling) and the Moriarty Pool (Swimming & Diving). There is limited seating at the Rosen Tennis Courts. You may want to provide your own seating outside the fencing surrounding the tennis courts. Our Equestrian team competes off-site at riding barns hosting each show. All spectators should remain in the seating areas provided at each venue. **Only credentialed media and authorized game management personnel will be allowed to view games from the press boxes or the sidelines.**

Can I talk with my student-athlete during games, matches or meets?

While it is important for your student-athlete to know that you are supporting them in the game, it is essential that they spend the time prior to and during the game focusing on the task at hand. This way, not only will they be able to perform their sport to the best of their ability, but they can also do so safely. We ask that once warm-ups begin on the field, court, mat or pool, you allow your student-athlete to be with their team to receive instruction from their coach and focus on the game.

Can I travel with the team?

Although we love to see our fans at our away games, due to university guidelines, only University personnel and student-athletes are permitted to travel on university-owned or leased transportation.

Do all teams have a “Senior Day”?

While most of our teams recognize their senior players during a game during the season (usually the last home game of the year), not all teams do so. Some teams prefer to honor their seniors either privately or during an “end of season team dinner”, etc. Student-athletes should check with their team captains or coach about what traditions their team follows.

Can I bring our pet to the games?

Service animals are permitted outside of the fenced perimeter of the athletic fields at all competition venues. When indoors, the owner of the service animal must make every effort to remain separate from the general spectator population. Animals are **not** permitted in any seating area. Service animals are defined by the University as an animal required because of a disability and have been trained to perform a specific task. It would be best to leave family pets at home or in your family's vehicle. The full University policy regarding animals on campus can be found at

<https://handbook.bridgew.edu/sites/handbook/files/uploads/AnimalPolicy8-2-2021.pdf>.

Where can I take photos during the games?

We welcome all our family and friends to take as many pictures as they like. However, only credentialed media will be allowed into the competition areas. All other photographers must remain outside the fence surrounding the outdoor venues. Indoors, we ask that all family photographers stay well outside the playing court/mat. In the Moriarty Pool, photographs may be taken from the elevated spectator seating. This is to ensure the safety not only of our student-athletes and officials, but also of the amateur photographer.

Please note, there should be no flash photography at any venue.

Can we tailgate before or after the games?

All tailgating and post-game barbecues / dinners for outdoor games, matches and meets must be held outside the fields or courts' fencing in the parking lot. Reservations for homecoming tailgating spaces must be made starting September 1, 2024, at

https://bsu6.glitnirticketing.com/bsuticket/cms/view.php?id=tile_BSUtix1840 Post-game dinners and snacks for our indoor sports can be held in the building's common areas with advance notice to that sport's head coach. Having tailgating activities in the common areas and outside the Swenson Field or Alumni Park fence in the parking lot will allow all family and friends to stay as long as they want.

Can I bring a noisemaker / cowbell / horn / whistle / boom stick to the game?

Unfortunately, the NCAA has prohibited the use of "artificial noise makers" during intercollegiate athletic contests for the sports of tennis, baseball, softball, lacrosse, volleyball and football. In other sports such as soccer, artificial noisemakers are allowed during specific times during the game. The game management staff, in conjunction with each team, has created specific music for use during the games. If you do bring an "artificial noisemaker" to the game, you will be asked to keep it in your car. Continued use of an "artificial noisemaker" may be grounds for your removal from the game site.

The Umpire / Referee / Game Official is just awful! Who do I talk to?

If the game, match or meet official has performance issues, please rest assured that we have recognized that as well. Each officiating board provides an evaluation instrument that every head coach completes after each contest. In addition, the department's administration meets annually with the officiating board's administrative staff to discuss issues that come up. It is important that you cheer for the team in a **LOUD, PROUD AND POSITIVE** manner and leave dealing with the officials to the team's coaches and university's administration.

What's the best way to support my team?

The best way to support your team is to cheer **LOUD and PROUD!** Being part of an intercollegiate team is fun, exciting, and at times – HARD! They are working to balance academics and their love for their sport. While in season, it's not uncommon to be putting in over 25 hours a week for practice, games, travel, etc. This can be stressful. Hearing a family member cheer them on **POSITIVELY** or listen to them through when

things might not be going as well as they like is a real boost. Ultimately, we are all here to make their intercollegiate athletic experience the best it can be – for them and their team.

ACADEMIC COMPLIANCE

What are the requirements for my son/daughter to keep their athletic eligibility?

To ensure continued eligibility for intercollegiate athletics, student-athletes should keep in mind the "2-12-24" rule. This means maintaining a **2.0 cumulative grade point average**, being enrolled in at least **12 credit hours** each semester, and passing at least **24 credit hours** over the past two semesters.

My student was on an I.E.P. in high school and has been told they should only take 9 credit hours per semester as an academic accommodation. Can they still play sports?

Yes, your student can potentially still participate in sports. They should meet with **Chanelle Melton, the Manager for Diversity, Inclusion, and Compliance**. Together, they will file a waiver request with the NCAA. If granted, your student-athlete may be able to participate in intercollegiate athletics while enrolled in fewer than 12 credit hours as part of their academic accommodation.

My student was on an I.E.P. in high school but didn't tell anyone when they went to BSU during their freshman year. Now, they have a cumulative grade point average of less than 2.0. Is there anything they can do to restore their athletic eligibility?

Yes, there may be options available. Your student should meet with **Sue Crosby-Tangen, the Associate Director of Athletics for Student-Athlete Welfare**, and **Chanelle Melton, the Manager of Diversity, Inclusion, and Compliance**. Chanelle will assess whether your student-athlete is eligible to appeal their athletic eligibility status to the Sr. Associate Vice President for Student Life and Athletics. It's crucial to understand that regardless of whether the appeal is granted, all student-athletes are responsible for their current grade point average and would need to improve it within one semester—a challenging task. It's highly recommended to seek academic accommodations as soon as your student-athlete arrives on campus. To request academic accommodations, student-athletes should contact the **Office of Student Accessibility Services**, located in the **Academic Achievement Center** in Maxwell Library.

Are there study halls for student-athletes to attend?

Individual teams may occasionally hold study halls for their team members. However, we strongly encourage all student-athletes who need academic support to take advantage of the peer tutoring and other services offered through the **Academic Achievement Center**, located in **Maxwell Library**. These resources are available to help all students succeed academically. If additional coordination is needed, **Sue Crosby-Tangen, the Associate Director of Athletics for Student-Athlete Welfare**, is available to assist in connecting student-athletes with the appropriate resources, including Academic Coaches through the Academic Achievement Center.

SPORTS MEDICINE / ATHLETIC TRAINING

Does my student need a team physical and when can I get one?

All first-year student-athletes (freshman/transfer) and third year student athletes must have a physical stating that they are able to participate in competitive athletics without restriction. According to the NCAA, physicals for first year student athletes must have been completed within six months prior to their first date of practice. For example, football reports on August 14 and their physical must be dated on or after February 14 of that same year. Spring sports play a fall nontraditional season and must use that date as their first date of practice. Physicals for third year student athletes can be within 12 months of their first practice. The physical must include a statement similar to your student-athlete being “cleared to compete in intercollegiate athletics” or “cleared to participate in sports”, etc. the exam date must be clearly documented and signed by a Medical Doctor (or nurse practitioner)

My student had their physical over six months ago, but within a year. A new physical won't be covered by my insurance. What happens now?

A physical can be done at the BSU Wellness Center, free of charge. However, they should schedule that physical as soon as possible, as appointments for “well physicals” through the Wellness Center books up early. Student-athletes will not be allowed to practice without a valid physical on file with the Sports Medicine Department.

What other sports medicine requirements do my student-athlete need to complete?

Each year, student-athletes will receive an email from the Sports Medicine Department with directions on how to complete all the necessary requirements online. They will need to provide the following documentation online:

1. A complete athletic health questionnaire and emergency contact information.
2. A copy of the front of the health insurance card
3. Verification of receipt of all educational materials, including concussion, mental health resources and sickle cell.
4. Sickle cell trait status documentation (First-year student-athletes only).
5. A completed concussion baseline symptom inventory for first- and third-year physicals submitted online.

My student was injured during practice or a game. Who should they see?

They should see one of our National Athletic Trainers’ Association (NATA) board-certified Athletic Trainers. They are all licensed allied health practitioners through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and are ready and willing to help! They will evaluate their injury or illness and can treat or refer them accordingly.

My student was referred to a specialist by the BSU Athletic Trainers. Who covers the bill?

All medical bills associated with any injuries sustained while competing for a Bridgewater State University athletic team are the responsibility of the student-athlete or parent in accordance with your insurance plan. BSU does not carry any supplemental or “athletic insurance” for our student-athletes.

Can student-athletes see their own specialist?

Yes, of course. However, they must advise our Sports Medicine Staff of their choice of specialist so they can make additional contact to help facilitate their care and rehabilitation. Any time a student-athlete is seen for an injury or illness by a medical professional, a written note must be presented with a diagnosis, treatment plan and return to play status. The student-athlete cannot return to participation at any level without written clearance from the treating physician and completing a “return to play” protocol.

What about “catastrophic insurance coverage”?

The NCAA provides Catastrophic Insurance Coverage in the event of an injury or illness that costs in excess of \$90,000. For catastrophic injuries or illnesses, BSU carries a GAP insurance policy that would cover from \$50,000 up to \$90,000 when the NCAA Catastrophic Insurance Coverage would apply.

SPORTS INFORMATION

I can't get to the game, meet or match. Can I livestream the contest?

We make every effort to livestream most contests. Just go to the www.bsubears.com website, select your sport and click on the “Schedule”. The links to either “Live Stats” or “Video” are next to each contest. At the present time we are unable to livestream our tennis matches.

How does my local newspaper get information about student-athletes playing sports at BSU?

Included in the online preseason materials will be a form for student-athletes to complete that includes a section on your local newspaper and other media outlets. They should complete this section as completely as possible, so our Sports Information Director and his staff know where to send the game press releases. Please remember that not all student-athletes are included in every press release.

I've been checking my local newspaper and there isn't any news about my student's outstanding week. Why not?

After each game, our Sports Information Director sends out press releases to all the local newspapers and media outlets. It is up to those media outlets to select what to print and what not to print.

Where can I follow the team that my student competes for?

All the BSU sports action can be found at www.bsubears.com. The latest games and other news are carried right on the front page. Specific team's news is then archived on their own page. Just click on Sports and “drag and drop” to the specific team and “News”. Usually, each team has their own twitter and Instagram pages too! Just ask your student-athlete how to follow them!

Where can I get the box score?

On each team's individual site, you can “drag and drop” to the “Schedule”. Then just click on the “Box score” or “Recap” for the specific game you are interested in.

I've been following the stats closely throughout the year. I think the box score is wrong. Who should I call?

Our sports information staff is well-trained in the use of StatCrew, the computer-based statistical software package used for most of our sports. This software program has several safeguards in place to make sure the stats are correct before they are uploaded to both the Conference and NCAA websites. Any inconsistencies are picked up by either the software or the NCAA.

My student had an outstanding week but did not win the MASCAC's (or Little East, Pilgrim League, etc.) Player (Rookie) of the week. Who should I call to discuss this?

Each week the MASCAC (or Little East, Pilgrim League, etc.) receives nominations from each member institution's Sports Information Director for each sport. The Conference Office considers all nominations and selects the student-athlete who excelled above all others that specific week. While usually objective, sometimes nominations need to be considered on a case-by-case basis. Phone calls to the MASCAC (or Little East, Pilgrim League, etc.) Conference Office regarding Players (Rookies) of the Week are not appropriate at the college level.

FUNDRAISING

Why is the team fundraising?

Every team is different. Some teams like to fundraise for those "extras," such as team sweats, tee shirts, etc. Other teams like to fundraise for trips to compete outside the normal schedule and in regions such as Hawaii or Puerto Rico. Other teams, such as baseball, softball or lacrosse must fundraise to cover the cost to travel to for their "Southern Training Trip."

Why do they have to work so many games at Gillette Stadium?

Each team develops their own fundraising plan. One popular fundraising initiative is for teams to work at Gillette Stadium or Boston College during football games, concerts, commencements, etc. While it does take a lot of time on singular days, it does raise a significant amount of money for the team, far greater than tee-shirt sales, raffles, etc.

Does the department fundraise on a larger scale?

The Athletic Department has two larger initiatives to help offset any individual team fundraising and to directly support our student-athletes. The Crimson Pride Challenge is the annual department-wide fundraising appeal to benefit our student-athletes and athletic teams. During a 3-week period in October (around Homecoming) we have a social media driving campaign where donors can contribute to the athletic program and designate the team of their choice to be the direct beneficiary of their donation. The Crimson Pride Classic Golf Tournament is held each summer, giving our supporters a way to enjoy a great day of golf while also supporting their individual team as well!

CONTACT INFORMATION

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