

Athletics Program



Greetings from West Chester University's Athletics Program and Athletics Advisory Board

This fact sheet will provide you with some basic information about WCU athletics as well as the policies and people that you should be aware of.

Athletics Vision Statement

The academic and athletic success of our student-athletes is our goal. West Chester University believes that a well conducted intercollegiate athletic program, based on sound educational principles and practices, is a necessary part of the educational mission of the University and that the safety and welfare of our student-athletes is of primary concern.

Faculty working with Athletics to enrich the Student-Athlete college experience.

The Department of Athletics is developing a program where faculty volunteers affiliate with specific WCU sports teams with the intention of enhancing the student-athlete experience. The concept is to provide mentoring, role modeling and guidance for the student-athlete. Interested faculty should contact Craig Stevens.

The **West Chester University Athletics** Program has a rich and successful history in athletics. We are members of the NCAA, Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference (PSAC), National Intercollegiate Rugby Association (NIRA) and the Gymnastics East Conference (GEC) Presently, there are 24 Intercollegiate Athletic Programs at WCU. We have one of the largest D-II programs in the country. Men's sports include: baseball, basketball, cross country, football, golf, indoor track and field, soccer, swimming & diving, tennis and outdoor track & field (n = 10). Women's sports include: basketball, cross country, field hockey, golf, gymnastics, indoor track and field, lacrosse, rugby, soccer, softball, swimming & diving, tennis, outdoor track & field, and volleyball (n = 14). There is also a cheerleading squad. In the 2025-2026 academic year there were **608 student-athletes** participating in these programs. Of the 608 student-athletes at West Chester, 161 are from out of state.

representing 20 different states. There are 10 international student-athletes representing seven countries.

2025-2026 Athletic highlights include

- 13 student-athletes were named NCAA All-Americans by their respective coach's associations
- 12 programs qualified for their respective NCAA Championships: Field Hockey, W Soccer, M & W Cross Country, M & W Swimming, M & W Golf, Men's Basketball, Baseball, Women's Lacrosse, Softball
- 2 National Semifinalists – (Field Hockey, Baseball)
- 1 National Finalist – (Baseball)
- 3 PSAC Coach of the Year: Steve Mazurek (Men's Swimming), Chris Merce (Men's Golf), Betty Ann Kempf Townsley (W Soccer)
- 3 PSAC Champions: Men's Swimming, Women's Swimming, Men's Golf
- 7 PSAC Freshman/Rookie of the Year: Paul-Arthur Roth (M Golf), Marti Rosell Diez (Men's Swimming), Cara Murphy (W Golf), Cassie Nugin (Women's Outdoor Track & Field), Merissa Herring (W Lacrosse), Kathryn Dougherty (W Soccer), Greta Saville (Women's Swimming)
- 4 PSAC Athlete of the Year: Julian Costa (Baseball), Kianna Barber (Women's Soccer), Paul Demesy (Men's Swimming), Hanna Lignell (Women's Golf).
- Dixon Trophy Winners.
- WCU has won the Dixon Trophy six times.

2025-2026 Academic highlights include

- 480 WCU Athletic Director Academic Honor Roll recipients (min. of 3.0 GPA, or 3.0 GPA; 460 in 2024-25)
- 235 EAST-COMM Academic Honor Roll recipients (min 3.4 GPA; first year awarded)
- 322 PSAC Academic Honor Roll recipients, (min GPA of 3.25; 289 in 2024-25)
- 185 D-II Assoc. of Athletic Directors Academic Honor Roll recipients – new school record (min of 3.5 GPA; 180 in 2024-25).
- 1 CoSIDA Academic All-American: Veerle Hersman (Field Hockey)

The **Academic Success Rate (ASR)** for all WCU student-athletes was **86%** (87% in 2023-2024). **Graduation rates** (based on 5 years) for the 2018-2019 cohort of student-athletes was **81%** (77% in 2023-2024) versus the student body's rate of **71%** (72%). The four-year rate was **74% versus 71%** respectively. Historically, when comparing student-athletes to the WCU students at large the spring term and cumulative **GPA** of the student-athletes is almost always higher than the student body. There is an occasional exception. Note that due to the NCAA extending eligibility due to the pandemic some student-athletes have taken advantage of the extra year to remain in school. A table of the GPAs for the last two years is provided next.

	S-A men	all men	S-A women	all women	All S-A	all undergrad
Academic Year	24-25/25-26	24-25/25-26	24-25/25-26	24-25/25-26	24-25/25-26	24-25/25-26
Spring Term GPA	3.014/3.165	2.960/3.004	3.566/3.455	3.258/3.284	3.289/3.336	3.109/3.168
Cumulative GPA	3.098/3.226	3.028/3.074	3.518/3.478	3.279/3.318	3.308/3.375	3.154/3.217

Bold numbers represent the higher GPA per category. S-A refers to student-athlete.

Time investment: The NCAA mandates that athletes practice and compete for no more than 20 hours per week. This does not include travel time to away contests, a contest which takes longer than 3 hours (allotted time for contest), injury treatment time or their individual preparation. Data from the NCAA in 2017 indicates that Division II student athletes dedicate 35.9 hours per week to academics and 33.5 hours per week to athletics.

Scholarships: Many student-athletes are not on scholarship. The average athletics scholarship at West Chester University is \$4,294.89 per year. In 2024-2025, 56% (360 of 644) of our total number of student-athletes receive athletics aid. A total of \$1,519,880 of scholarship monies were awarded in 2023-2024 to 362 student-athletes, which computes to \$4,199 per student-athlete. In the AY 2021-2022, West Chester was ranked **10th out of 18** PSAC schools and **7th out of 13** PaSSHE schools in scholarship equivalencies despite fielding the most teams in the conference. (An equivalency enables comparisons between private and public school tuition.)

No special favors: Athletes should not ask for, nor are they expected to receive, special favors or dispensation such as a change of grade to be eligible to participate in WCU athletics.

Student-Athlete Success program. Student Athlete Success (SAS) **engages, prepares and inspires** student-athletes to become leaders through opportunities for personal and professional growth. The Golden Pathways Program will be introduced in the Fall of 2026, offering intentional programming to assist student-athletes as they navigate through their college career. This program will focus on transition and adjustment in year one, skill building and self-awareness in year two, leadership and career readiness in year three, and life after sports in year four. Additionally, student-athletes can take part in leadership development through the Michael Horrocks Leadership Institute.

Important Information:

1. The **Excused Absence Policy for University Sanctioned Events.** In part this policy states "Students participating in University-sanctioned events such as NCAA athletic events will be granted an excused absence(s) by the respective faculty members for class periods missed. Students will be granted the privilege of taking, at an alternative time to be determined by the professor, scheduled examinations or quizzes that will be missed." .. "Professors can provide a fair alternative to taking the examination or quiz that will be missed." View the [full policy](#).
2. **Priority Registration Policy**
 - Better called "**conflict avoidance scheduling**"
 - Enables student-athletes and other students with scheduling needs to register prior to the general student population thereby avoiding conflicts between classes and athletic activities.
3. Concern with **single sections of required classes** scheduled during the designated practice time which causes disruption of practice as student-athletes cannot choose a section to avoid the conflict.
4. **Mentors for Student-athletes.** For student-athletes who have academic difficulties there are mentors sponsored by the Athletics department that aid the student-athlete with academic issues, but they do not provide advisement. The student-athletes sign off on the Buckley amendment, so it is appropriate to discuss student's grades with these mentors. Please see the athletic department website for further information on the Academic Mentoring Program.
5. **Advising.** On the [advising webpage](#) there is information for advisors on NCAA guidelines.
6. **Survey results.**
 - The 2019 GOALS study reported that over 90% of student-athletes said college sports helped them grow in personal responsibility, work ethic, teamwork and goal setting.
 - A 2020 Gallup study revealed that former NCAA student-athletes are more likely than other college graduates to be "thriving" in areas of four well-being outcomes: community, social, physical and purpose.

West Chester University is a member of Division II of the NCAA.

The division, whose motto is “life in the balance”, feels that a balanced approach is the best for the student-athlete experience. Identifying the six key attributes of learning, service, passion, sportsmanship, resourcefulness and balance, Division II student-athletes combine comprehensive learning and academic development with high-level competition along with community engagement. Want to learn more about NCAA Division II, please visit the [NCAA Website](#) read the Distinguishing Dozen below.

The Distinguishing Dozen 12 Characteristics That Set Division II Apart

1. Graduation rates. The Division II student-athlete graduation rate is consistently higher than that of the total student body. Division II also features a high number of first-generation college students, thus increasing the access to education.

2. Academic emphasis. Division II’s regionalization philosophy in scheduling results in limited missed class time for student-athletes.

3. Athletics scholarships. The partial athletics scholarship model rewards athletics ability while allowing student-athletes to earn other sources of financial aid. A recent study on the financial impact of the partial-scholarship model found that in general, scholarship student-athletes benefit institutions’ overall academic profile, and the partial-aid model generates revenue for the school.

4. Balanced bottom line. The median expense for Division II athletics departments with football is roughly \$6 million, while that figure is about \$15 million for Division I Football Championship Subdivision programs and about \$64 million for programs in the Division I Football Bowl Subdivision.

5. Favorable admission rates. Division II membership is split almost evenly between public and private institutions. On average, Division II schools have the highest admission rate (70%, versus 62-63% in the other two divisions).

6. Community engagement. Through student-athlete leadership, Division II has enjoyed long-term and successful partnerships with the Make-A-Wish Foundation, Team IMPACT and military groups. In addition, Division II conducts community engagement activities at all championships final sites.

7. Positive game environment. Division II members pledge to conduct athletics contests in a family-friendly environment that is civil and entertaining.

8. Unique geographical footprint. Division II is the only NCAA division with schools in Alaska (Anchorage and Fairbanks), Puerto Rico (Bayamon, Mayaguez and Rio Piedras) and Canada (Simon Fraser).

9. National championship opportunities. Division II features unparalleled opportunity for student athletes to advance to national championship competition as a result of the division’s generous championship access ratios (the highest among the three NCAA divisions).

10. National Championships Festivals. Division II is the only NCAA division that conducts “National Championships Festivals,” Olympic-style events in which several national championships are held at a single site over a period of several days.

11. Make It Yours. This student-athlete-driven brand enhancement strengthens awareness among external audiences by clearly communicating the experience Division II schools create for student-athletes.

12. Diversity and inclusion. Matching grants encourage access, recruitment, selection, and the long-term success of ethnic minorities and women in administration and coaching.

Who to contact if you have questions or issues with student-athletes or the athletic program.

- **Dr. W. Craig Stevens** is a Professor and Chair of Kinesiology and the NCAA Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR) for WCU. The role of the FAR is to ensure that the academic institution establishes and maintains the appropriate balance between academics and intercollegiate athletics as well as safeguard student-athlete well-being. Dr. Stevens term ends in May 2027. His email is cstevens@wcupa.edu. His phone is 610-436-2386.
- **Dr. Chris Stangl** is an Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Political Science. Dr. Stangl begins his term in August 2027. His email address is cstangl@wcupa.edu . His phone is 610-436-3435.
- **Mr. Andy Lehman** is the Vice President of University Affairs and Chief of Staff. He has oversight responsibilities with the Department of Athletics. His email address is alehman@wcupa.edu . His phone is 610-436-3111
- **Mr. Terence Beattie** is the Director of Athletics. He oversees the department of intercollegiate athletics and has ultimate responsibility over all athletic programs. His email is tbeattie@wcupa.edu His phone is 610-436-3555.
- **Ms. Kellianne Milliner** is the Associate Athletics Director and Senior Woman Administrator and Director of the Academic Mentoring Program. Her email is kmilliner@wcupa.edu . Her phone is 610-436-3573.
- **Ms. Deirdre Bertotti** is the Assistant Athletics Director and Compliance Coordinator. Her email address is dbertotti@wcupa.edu Her phone number is 610-436-2405.