

Navigating Your Future In Pandemic

Advice for Students and Families from College Athletic Advisor

August Update

The worldwide Covid-19 pandemic continues to impact every aspect of American life, and American educational institutions are not exempt. What can you do to keep your college search on track? Our advisors, college coaches, admissions experts and educators have this advice:

Once again, the NCAA “dead period” continues. NCAA Division 1 and 2 remain in an extended Covid-19 “dead period” through August 31st. Even if the dead period is not formally extended, it will be difficult for coaches to recruit off campus beyond a relatively narrow travel radius.

- Just because coaches can't travel doesn't mean they aren't recruiting. This IS THE PERFECT TIME TO REACH OUT WITH WELL PLANNED COMMUNICATION TO COLLEGE COACHES!
- Things that are MORE important because of covid-19 in recruiting:
 - your video(s)
 - your resume outlining your pre-covid times/stats/performance levels
 - recommendations from coaches and educators
 - focused, high quality communication of interest to coaches at great fit colleges
 - being registered with the NCAA Eligibility Center (or NAIA Clearinghouse) if you are a rising junior (or sophomore)
 - consistent demonstrated commitment to learning, training, and individual growth
- Things that are LESS important because of covid-19
 - SAT/ACT scores: Standardized testing will not be required for 2021 graduates and their status going forward is in serious doubt. Taking these tests is a high-risk activity in pandemic, and while the NCAA and NAIA will probably not formally announce a testing waiver for 2021 graduates until later in the fall at the earliest, it is inevitable. Do not take the SAT's with the idea that “well the NCAA will still require them” – they will not.
 - traveling for competition: If you are in an area where competition has not been completely shut down by pandemic, it is best to stay local. You can make great video for college coaches playing a local opponent. You do not need to travel beyond easy driving radius to “get seen.”
 - boutique community service activity: pandemic has worked in many ways to make privilege in our society even more powerful, but this is an area where anyone with an internet connection can do meaningful service in ways that they could not before. If you can't think of anything, sign up to be a volunteer contact tracer – you can do it remotely and we will need you if we are going to play sports in the spring
- Covid-19 DON'T'S
 - DON'T “wait for clarity” before you move forward with your search... it is going to be a while and the landscape will continue to change rapidly. Colleges are clear: their admissions timeline/calendar is the priority. Waiting is not an option.
 - DON'T take unnecessary health risks in terms of travel or being in large groups. You are risking your own health and everyone else's. We are in this together. The faster we flatten the curve the more “normal” things will get.

College sports are now focused on returning in 2021, high schools will mostly follow. NCAA Divisions 2 and 3, the NAIA, and every junior college organization has postponed competition through the end of the fall semester. In Division 1, most mid-major conferences have postponed athletics until spring. The hold outs are the "Power 5" conferences and a minority of other bowl subdivision circuits. Football powerhouse universities are hoping for a drop in Covid-19 spread that simply is not coming fast enough to help them. They will ultimately be forced to postpone competition to avoid the financial losses canceling mid-season would bring. In the words of one D1 coach, "we are kicking the can down the road as far as we can before we cancel." Limited, local sports competition at the club level is still possible most places. Wear a mask.

College is going to get more affordable. The coming semester is going to be a huge challenge for most colleges and universities, the hopeful efforts at maximizing in person instruction probably made these institutions less prepared than they ought to be for another Covid-19 impacted semester. As a result, colleges are going to have lower retention rates, higher numbers of students failing, more transfers, and more uncertainty with students taking gap years or utilizing the variety of options that remote education allows. The pressure to increase discounts and reduce selectivity to build enrollment is going to hit industry wide. 2021 and 2022 graduates will be looking at better chances of being accepted with better pricing than any of their immediate peers. This could be combined with substantially increased federal grant programs as part of continuing "Covid-19 Relief" efforts in congress. Be skeptical of advisors looking at pre-covid testing data to guide your search.

The scammers are out. "Recruiting services" like NCSA are busy selling during pandemic. Unless you think your college search benefits from spam emails and offers of discounts you would get anyway, stick with professional, ethical college advising. Remember, the goal is a great fit: academically, socially, athletically, financially... paying more for an "athletic scholarship" is not the optimal pathway to success. Organizations like NACAC and the IECA offer great tools for parents and directories of members to consult.

Basically, if you read our newsletters, you know what is coming. Not to toot our own horn, but we have been keeping our advisees ahead of the curve all spring and summer. Now that we enter a fall of continuing uncertainty, our clients know they are working with the most accurate information available anywhere. Want to compare our predictions with what happened? Our newsletters are archived on our Covid-19 FAQ page: <https://collegeathleticadvisor.com/covid19faq/>

As always, if you are looking for individualized or institutional consulting help, we affordable webinars through outschool.com, collaboration with schools & community groups, remote counseling packages, hourly options and our elite recruiting camp that gives you the tools to run your search yourself! Make an initial appointment through the link on our [homepage](#) or just give me a call!

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