

Chapter 3: Membership Guidelines & Standards of Conduct

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A. Membership Guidelines

Each sport club will determine its own membership guidelines, but they must be free of any restriction based on race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, gender, disability, age, or sexual orientation. The following guidelines will help determine an individual's membership status in any Texas A&M Sport Club.

- Student

Only registered graduate and undergraduate students at Texas A&M who have paid Rec Center fees are eligible for membership in the sport club(s) of their choice. Only student members have the right to hold offices, and Texas A&M students shall have membership priority.

- ◇ In order to compete and represent Texas A&M in a sport club, A&M **Undergraduate AND Graduate** students MUST be enrolled in at least 6 credit hours. Blinn TEAM students MUST be enrolled in at least 4 credit hours at Texas A&M. *Exception:* graduating seniors, may be taking less.
- ◇ **Blinn TEAM** students are eligible for participation in sport clubs because they pay University fees. They are considered students at Texas A&M, but are enrolled and take classes at both Texas A&M, as well as Blinn. Clubs should consult their league or association guidelines to determine these students' eligibility for club competitions. Blinn TEAM students may not hold the office of President or Treasurer for the club. **Blinn TEAM members MUST have a minimum overall 2.0 GPR at Texas A&M in order to fully participate with a club.**
- ◇ **Full time Blinn students are NOT eligible to participate in any Sport Club activity.**
- ◇ **Texas A&M Former Students are NOT eligible to participate in any Sport Club activity.**
- ◇ A Texas A&M Galveston student may participate in a sport club on the college station campus if that Sport Club is not offered at the A&M Galveston campus. The Sport Club staff must be notified of this situation. *These students MUST abide by the same procedures, grade and credit hour rules, and conduct policies as College Station students.*
- ◇ **Co-op and Health Science students** must provide a letter from their program showing proof of enrollment and credit hours to the Sport Clubs office.
- ◇ **Self-Identification for participation:** *Individuals who identify as a woman are eligible to play on a women's (and co-rec) teams; Individuals who identify as a man are eligible to play on men's and (co-rec) teams. Transgender participants are eligible to play based on their expressed gender identity so long as they comply with all player eligibility. It is recommended that clubs make sure they are in compliance with each National Governing Body for eligibility.*

- Associate

Faculty or staff members who holds a current Rec Center membership **AND** pay club dues may be a member of a Sport Club. However, **faculty and staff members are ineligible to travel, compete, and represent Texas A&M on behalf of a Sport Club.**

- Minors

Minors who are Texas A&M University students and have their guardians' consent and signature on the Assumption of Risk form are eligible to practice & compete.

Insurance

Texas A&M University does not insure students who are injured during participation in extracurricular activities, such as sport clubs competitions, travel, practices, and other club activities; however, it is possible to purchase insurance plans for individual sport clubs events. The Department of Recreational Sports **strongly recommends** all Sport Clubs members have adequate medical insurance coverage. Please contact the Sport Clubs staff for more information about sport clubs events and insurance coverage.

Intramural Sports Eligibility

Eligibility rules for [Intramural Sports](#) are designed to provide an opportunity for everyone to play, to provide for balanced and fair competition, and to keep a team from stacking its roster with athletes of demonstrated or probable skill. The rules listed below cannot provide for all possibilities; therefore the Intramural Sports Staff, with the counsel of the Recreational Sports Advisory Committee, reserves the right to rule on the eligibility status of participants not covered specifically by the following rules.

As outlined in the [2016-2017 Intramural Rules & Regulations Handbook](#), competitive Sport Clubs members fall within a restricted player category. "Competitive Sport Clubs Members" are defined as:

Competitive sport club members:

Any individual who appears on the travel list for that academic year of a registered Texas A&M Sport Club who competes with the Texas A&M Club team. In addition any individual who has participated in a minimum of 5 practices after the try-out phase with the competitive club is considered a competitive sport club member. Individuals who participate in fall practices will still be considered members for the sport club the entire academic school year, i.e. club soccer members from the fall will still constitute as restricted players in the spring. Off season practices are considered regularly scheduled practices even if no coach is present. The intramural sports staff will look at each situation individually. It is suggested that club members wanting to play intramural sports with other club members, check with the full time intramural staff prior to the season to prevent possible violations.

Limitations for Restricted Players

- No team shall have more than two "restricted" players on its roster (**Exception: sand volleyball teams cannot have more than one volleyball Sport Clubs member**)
- Teams with competitive club members must play in the **competitive division** (Exception: no restrictions for doubles teams)
- Restrictions last for fall and spring semesters
- Competitive club members must play in the highest skill level offered for the current academic year in their "associated" sport

<u>Sport Club</u>	<u>Associated Intramural Sport</u>
Baseball	Softball
Basketball	Basketball
Golf	Golf
Soccer	Indoor and Outdoor Soccer
Water Polo	Inner tube Water Polo
Ultimate	Ultimate
Volleyball	Volleyball
Racquetball	Racquetball

Questions regarding competitive Sport Clubs members and Intramural Sports guidelines should be referred to an Intramural Sports Staff member at 979.862.1884 or im@rec.tamu.edu.

B. Sport Clubs Standards of Conduct

As students of Texas A&M University, Sport Clubs members have an obligation to conduct themselves and their organization in a manner compatible with the University's philosophy and function as an educational institution. Members of sport clubs are expected to act in a mature and responsible manner both on and off campus and especially while participating in club activities.

Inappropriate conduct or actions while participating in any Sport Clubs related activity will jeopardize the club's continued status as a recognized Sport Club. Furthermore, club members who participate in inappropriate activity which violates [University Student Rules](#), University policies, campus regulations, or state or federal laws will be subject to disciplinary action by the Department of Recreational Sports, Texas A&M University, and/or appropriate legal authorities.

Expectations

As members of the Sport Clubs Association you will be held to the following expectations. Members:

- Must be a currently enrolled student at Texas A&M University
- Abide by all policies, rules, and procedures established by Texas A&M University, the Division of Student Affairs, the Department of Recreational Sports, and the Department of Student Activities
- All participants must have a completed AOR on file with the Sport Clubs office.
- Must be respectful of Recreational Sports staff, Sport Clubs participants, fans, members, officials, and other teams
- If a member fails to meet these expectations; a meeting will be set up by the Sport Club staff and could result in the following: (1) limited practice/travel, (2) suspension or removal from club, and or (3) restricted club involvement
- **All Sport Clubs participants MUST present their Texas A&M ID to the Sport Clubs Supervisor in order to be eligible for participation at recreation facilities.**

Member Grade Point Ratio (GPR) Requirements

ALL officers MUST have AND maintain a minimum overall 2.5 GPR in order to maintain officer status and have at least a 2.0 in their previous semester.

***If an officer is removed, they will no longer be permitted to partake in officer duties.**

All Sport Clubs members MUST have AND maintain a minimum overall 2.0 GPR (3.0 for Grad Students) in order to participate in ALL club related activities. If a club member does not have an OVERALL 2.0 GPR/3.0 (Grad), the club member will meet with the Sport Clubs staff, and Club Officers and may be subject to ANY or ALL of the following actions:

- The club member **may** compete in any non-conference home or in-state competitions or events with prior approval from the Sport Club staff
- The club member **may** participate in **all non-competitive club functions** including fund-raising activities, meetings, etc.
- The club member **may not** compete in **ANY** conference, regional, or national competitions until the overall GPR meets the minimum 2.0 requirement
- The club member **may not** travel to **ANY** out-of-state competitions
- The club member will still pay all dues to the club, unless the club officers and the member agrees upon an alternate plan
- The number of practices the member competes in may be limited per week

*All grades will be checked at the beginning of the Fall 2016 semester based on all grades posted through the Summer 2016 semester. If a member is ineligible, the president and member will receive an email from the Sport Clubs office explaining and outlining the restrictions. *Anyone wishing to appeal this decision may contact the Sport Clubs staff to set up a meeting. The deadline to appeal will be stated in the notification email.*

Officer Expectations

- Must be a currently enrolled student at Texas A&M University and adhere to GPR and credit hour requirements. (***Undergrad AND Graduate students***)
- **Undergrad minimum GPR - 2.5, Grad - 3.5 to be an officer**
- **Must be enrolled in at least 6 credit hours per semester. (Undergrad & Grad)**
- Must be familiar with the information presented in this guidebook, and enforce the policies with club members, participants, and coaches/instructors
- Use initiative and good judgment when handling club matters
- Develop a club manual containing information that is applicable and unique to your organization
- Clubs must elect a president, treasurer, and safety officer
- Maintain good communication with the Sport Clubs staff
- An updated copy of the club's constitution must be submitted through the recognition site of Student Activities Online.
- Paperwork should be submitted complete and on time, including travel rosters, budget requests, and facility reservation requests, etc.
- **Attendance at monthly Sport Clubs Association meetings is MANDATORY** – it is *REQUIRED* 2 officers attend. Ask questions, be attentive and respectful, etc. Representatives who attend these meetings are the voice of the membership, so it is important the Sport Clubs staff know the needs, likes, and dislikes of your members
- Officers are expected to hold regular club meetings to discuss any and all necessary club business with the membership
- **Officers MUST attend monthly individual club meetings with Sport Clubs staff**

Safety Officer/Risk Management

- Understand the importance of adhering to a comprehensive risk management plan
- **Clubs MUST travel with someone who has gone through safety officer training. If elected Safety Officer is not traveling, another officer must complete training.**
- Abide by the policies and procedures presented in this guidebook
- Report all safety concerns, issues and incidents to the Sport Clubs staff in a timely manner
- Maintain and travel with an up-to-date club emergency contact list
- Check participants into practice to insure they have an AOR and SOC on file
- Inspect all equipment and facilities utilized by your club, and report all maintenance and repair needs to the Sport Clubs staff
- Keep an equipment inventory list
- Schedule student Rec Medics through the sport clubs office (pg 54-55)
- Attend the Safety/Risk Management training meeting which are offered at the beginning of each semester

C. Alcohol

Texas A&M's Student Rules state "drinking or having in possession any alcoholic or intoxicating beverage(s) in public areas of the campus is prohibited." It is important student leaders familiarize themselves with this student rule because it specifies how alcohol can play a part in student organization activities or events. However, as with many rules or policies, it is not unusual for there to be questions or interpretation differences that need clarification by advisors or administrators.

1. Alcohol is **PROHIBITED** during ANY club-related activity (home or on the road while traveling).
2. The possession, sale, use or consumption of alcoholic beverages, in public areas of the campus is prohibited.
3. No alcoholic beverage may be purchased through an organization's funds, nor may the purchase of alcohol for members or guests be undertaken or coordinated by any member in the name of, or on behalf of, the organization. The purchase or use of bulk quantity or common sources of such alcoholic beverage (i.e. kegs or cases) shall be prohibited.
3. No members, collectively or individually shall purchase for, serve to, or sell alcoholic beverages to any minor (i.e. those under legal drinking age).
5. When traveling, clubs are considered representing the university and department from the time you leave campus until the time you return to campus/College Station. **Club members and participants MAY NOT consume any alcohol during a Sport Clubs trip at any time (including at dinner or after an event has concluded).**
6. **These rules apply to ALL Club members as well as anyone coaching the club—(including student coaches).**

There is a ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY in regards to alcohol involved with any Sport Clubs related activity.

D. Hazing

As defined by the 2016-2017 Texas A&M University [Student Rules](#), "Hazing" means any intentional, knowing or reckless act, occurring on or off the campus of an educational institution, by one person alone or acting with others, directed against a student, that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in or maintaining membership in any organization whose members are or include students at an educational institution.

The Sport Clubs program encourages an inclusive atmosphere. Bullying, hazing, or any other situation that does not uphold and foster an inclusive atmosphere for club members at Texas A&M, will not be tolerated.

HAZING includes but is not limited to

- any type of physical brutality such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electric shocking, placing of a harmful substance on the body or similar activity
- any type of physical activity such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, calisthenics or other activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student
- any activity involving consumption of food, liquids, alcoholic beverages, liquor, drugs or other substances which subject the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or which adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student
- any activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism, that subjects the student to extreme mental stress, shame or humiliation, that adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the student that discourages the student from entering or remaining registered in an educational institution, or that may reasonably be expected to cause a student to leave the organization or the institution rather than submit to acts described in this subsection
- any activity that induces, causes or requires the student to perform a duty or task which involves a violation of the Penal Code

A person or organization commits a hazing offense if the person or organization

- Engages in hazing or assists in the commission of hazing
- solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in engaging in hazing
- intentionally, knowingly or recklessly permits hazing to occur
- has firsthand knowledge of the planning of a specific hazing incident involving a student in an educational institution, or firsthand knowledge that a specific hazing incident has occurred, and knowingly fails to report said knowledge in writing to the dean of students or other appropriate official of the institution

Hazing offenses carry very stiff penalties, including monetary and/or jail time, and **CONSENT IS NOT A DEFENSE**. Please refer to the [TAMU Student Rules](#) (student-rules.tamu.edu) for more information.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION— stophazing.tamu.edu

Texas A&M Sport Clubs promotes, supports, and encourages an inclusive atmosphere. ALL clubs are open and welcoming to all Texas A&M students regardless of differences, as long as they meet the minimum eligibility requirements.

E. Discipline

All Sport Clubs and their members have an obligation to operate within the rules and regulations set forth by Texas A&M University, the Department of Recreational Sports, and the Department of Student Activities. Any actions or activities that violate or possibly violate the [University Student Rules](#) will be shared with the appropriate University official for possible disciplinary action. In addition to the disciplinary actions taken by the Department of Recreational Sports, Sport Clubs may be held responsible for violations collectively and/or individually. All violations committed by clubs will be reviewed by the Sport Clubs staff may result in the loss of Sport Clubs Association membership or other disciplinary actions taken against the sport club involved. The discipline process has been developed to assist club leaders in correcting mistakes that have caused problems for the club and the University.

Violations will be reviewed by the Sport Clubs staff to determine if they are minor or major infractions. Minor infractions will be handled and resolved by the Sport Clubs Executive Committee. Major infractions will be reviewed and resolved by the Sport Clubs staff.

For minor and major infractions, clubs may be subject to a fine for violating any minor or major violation.

- **First infraction—\$50 will be deducted from the club’s allocation account, plus any sanctions levied.**
 - ***(Gas infractions for not filling up rental vehicles - \$50 per vehicle charged)***
- **Second infraction and on—\$100 will be deducted from the club’s allocation account, plus any sanctions levied.**
 - ***(Gas Infractions for not filling up rental vehicles a 2nd time—\$100 per vehicle charged, and club will NOT be permitted to use rental vehicles for 3 months)***

Disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to

- Probation
- Fines Levied
- Frozen Funds
- Loss of Funding
- Suspension of utilizing rental vehicles
- Loss of Facility Reservations
- Limited practices
- Loss of travel privileges
- Cancellation of games/matches/tournaments
- Loss of equipment usage
- Forfeiture of recognition status through Texas A&M University
- Sanctions on individual club members
- University disciplinary actions (which may include dismissal from Texas A&M University)

Notification of disciplinary action is placed in the Club's mailbox in the Sport Clubs Office and emailed to the Sport Club president within 48 hours.

Minor Infractions

Include, but are not limited to

- Failure to attend a required monthly Sport Clubs Association meeting (**\$50 fine from allocation. If your club misses the last meeting of the year, \$50 fine from following year allocation**)
- Submitting a late Trip Request form (**See procedure below**)
- Being late to or leaving early from a required monthly Sport Clubs Association meeting without prior notification to Sport Clubs staff
- Failure to notify Medics or staff of changes in schedule and/or practice times and games
- Failure to return borrowed Sport Clubs equipment within 24-48 hours of the completion of club's event/game/tournament
- Misuse of University property (e.g. allowing pets at the club's events or not cleaning up the facility at the conclusion of the club's events)
- Submitting receipts late (see page 42)
- Failure to submit paperwork on time

Procedures for Minor Infractions

1. Sport Clubs staff determines whether a minor infraction(s) has/have occurred
2. The staff will formally notify the club through an official letter that the club has committed a minor infraction and their case will be sent to the Executive Committee
3. On the first offense, the club will automatically be deducted \$50 from their allocation account. Within 48 hours of being notified of the first offense, the club will have the opportunity to schedule an appeal meeting with the Executive Committee. On the second offense, the club will be deducted \$100 and must meet with the Executive Committee
4. A written notification will be sent to the club notifying them of the decisions made by the Executive Committee. The Sport Clubs staff will also receive a copy of the letter
5. Late Trip Requests may result in the club not being allowed to travel, written notification will be sent
6. Clubs may appeal the Executive Committee's decision to the Sport Clubs staff.

For Minor Infractions, clubs will continue normal operating functions until the disciplinary process is conducted and completed.

After three or more minor infractions occur, the club will be placed on probation until the conclusion of the disciplinary process. Upon notification, all club activity is suspended until the review is completed by the Executive Committee.

Procedures for Late Trip Requests

All trip requests are due by Friday, (minimum) 5pm and/or 1 week prior to the club trip **through Maroonlink. Remember that your club can submit a request earlier.** If the deadline falls during a holiday, the deadline still applies.

1. The Sport Clubs staff will determine whether a trip request was submitted late.
2. The club will be contacted by a Sport Club staff member to inform them of the submittal of a late trip request. At that time the club will not be permitted to travel.
3. Club officers can request a meeting with the Sport club staff to discuss any extenuating circumstances causing the submittal of the late trip request.
4. After the meeting occurs, the Sport Clubs staff will determine the status of the trip request. These are reviewed and decided upon on a case by case basis.
5. The club may appeal the Sport Clubs staff's decision to the Associate Director of Sport clubs/Intramural Sports. Before appeal, you must notify a member of the Sport Club staff.

Major Infractions

Include, but are not limited to

- Failure to deposit funds into SOFC account
- Failure to submit a Trip Request form for travel
- Participation in events without previously notifying the Sport Clubs staff
- Possession of outside bank accounts or club credit cards: **This includes online fundraising sites such as GoFundme, etc**
- Misuse/misappropriation of University funds
- Any situations involving the use of or the presence of alcohol at any club related event, or Transporting and/or consuming alcohol or illegal substances while on official club trips (see page 17 – section C. Alcohol, for further explanation)
- Failure to represent Texas A&M University in a positive manner (e.g. notification by another club, university, and/or governing body)
- Displaying conduct incompatible with the University's function as an educational institution and the purpose of the Sport Clubs Program (i.e., unsportsmanlike conduct toward officials or opponents or disruptive behavior on trips)
- Allowing ineligible individuals to participate in club activities
- Allowing ineligible drivers to operate vehicles during club trips
- Hazing
- Discrimination/Non-Inclusive atmosphere
- Misuse of Rec Sports credit card
- Damages to lodging or property while on a Sport Club trip

Procedures for Major Infractions

1. Sport Clubs staff will determine if a major infraction (s) has/have occurred
2. The Sport Clubs staff will notify the club through a written notification that an investigation will begin dealing with possible violations
3. The Sport Clubs staff will schedule a meeting with the club to discuss the infractions. During the meeting, the club will have an opportunity to present their side.
4. After the meeting occurs, the Sport Clubs staff will determine one of three course of actions
 - Handle the situation in-house; the Sport Clubs staff will determine the appropriate sanctions against the sport club
 - If the situation involves individual Sport Clubs members, the case will be sent to the Department of Student Life to assess disciplinary sanctions against the individuals
 - If the situation involves the entire sport club, a hearing will be initiated through the Department of Student Activities. The Director of Student Activities, in conjunction with the Hearing Board Chair, shall discuss the case and determine whether disciplinary charges should be initiated
5. A written letter will be sent to the club notifying them of the decisions made by the Sport Clubs staff within 72 hours of the meeting
6. The club may appeal the Sport Clubs staff's decision to the Associate Director of Sport Clubs/Intramural Sports
7. If a club receives three major infractions in one year, the club may be subject to removal from the Sport Clubs Association.

If any club is placed on probation, these are the possible sanctions

- Annual allocation for the next academic year is reduced by a minimum of 50%
- Suspension of activities, including practices, games/tournaments
- Limited or no travel
- Community service
- Ineligible for Sport Club of the Year
- Ineligible for the Outstanding Club Member Awards

For Major Infractions, upon formal notification, the sport club will be placed on probation until the situation is resolved, and all club activity is suspended (including practices, games, travel, meetings, etc.) until the review is completed by the Sport Clubs staff. All funding from your Sport Clubs allocation is automatically frozen until the hearing. The club is not eligible for any additional funding (e.g. risk management) until the hearing has been conducted.

Appeal Process

The appeal process exists to ensure that all disciplinary actions taken against members of the Sport Clubs Association are fair and equitable. To file an appeal, follow the steps listed below.

Decisions made by the Sport Clubs Executive Committee may be appealed to the Sport Clubs Director.

1. Written notification from the club president to the Sport Club Director detailing the club's rationale for the appeal and any circumstances related to the infraction(s) must be submitted within 48 hours
2. The 48 hour period begins when written notification of the disciplinary action being taken is emailed to the president and placed in the club's mailbox located in the Sport Clubs Office (extensions may be granted when appropriate)
3. The Sport Clubs Staff will set up a meeting with the individual(s) involved in the situation
4. After fully investigating the situation, the Sport Club Director will notify the club of the ruling on the appeal. This may include upholding, rejecting, or modifying the action taken by the Sport Clubs Executive Committee.

Decisions made by the Sport Clubs staff may be appealed to the Associate Director - Sport Clubs/Intramural Sports.

1. Written notification from the club president to the Associate Director detailing the club's rationale for the appeal, and any circumstances related to the infraction(s), must be submitted within 72 hours
2. The 72 hour period begins when written notification of the disciplinary action being taken is emailed or placed in the club's mailbox located in the Sport Clubs Office (extensions may be granted when appropriate)
3. The Associate Director will set up a meeting with the individual(s) involved in the situation
4. After fully investigating the situation, the Associate Director will notify the club of the ruling on the appeal. This may include upholding, rejecting, or modifying the action taken by the Sport Clubs staff.

If needed, Sport Clubs should follow the [Grievance Procedures](#) established by the Texas A&M University [Student Rules](#) when appealing decisions made by the Associate Director of Recreational Sports. Be forewarned that the appeal of a disciplinary action that seems severe to the club could result in alternative penalties being levied by the person/committee who hears the appeal.