

Nontraditional Courses for NCAA Divisions I and II Initial Eligibility

NCAA rules regarding software-based credit recovery, virtual, online, independent study and correspondence courses have changed. These types of courses, which are identified by the NCAA Eligibility Center as nontraditional courses, must meet specific guidelines in order to be used toward initial eligibility for college-bound student-athletes. As discussed in previous newsletters, the rule change was adopted for Division I college-bound student-athletes and was effective August 1, 2010. This legislation has now been adopted for Division II as well.

What Are the Requirements for Nontraditional Courses?

To be used toward initial eligibility, nontraditional courses must meet the following criteria:

1. Courses taught through distance learning, online, credit recovery, etc. need to be comparable in length, content and rigor to courses taught in a traditional classroom setting. Students may not skip lessons or test out of modules. The course must be four-year college preparatory.
2. All courses must include ongoing access between the instructor and student, as well as regular interaction for purposes of teaching, evaluating and providing assistance. This may include, for example, exchanging of e-mails between the student and teacher, feedback on assignments, and the opportunity for the teacher to engage the student in individual instruction.
3. Any course taken must have a defined time period for completion. For example, it should be clear whether the course is meant to be taken for an entire semester or during a more condensed time frame.
4. Nontraditional courses should be clearly identified as such on the high school transcript.

When Does this Rule Take Effect?

Division I. As mentioned above, the rule is currently in effect for Division I, and applies to any nontraditional course completed on or after **August 1, 2010**.

Division II. The rule applies for students first entering an NCAA Division II college or university on or after August 1, 2011, regardless of when the nontraditional course was completed.

To read more about nontraditional courses, go to the NCAA Eligibility Center website at **www.eligibilitycenter.org**.