



RARA, CARA, VARA and Permissibility Under New Time Balance Legislation

The following chart attempts to provide coaches and administrators with greater clarity regarding which required activities (including countable athletic activities and other required athletically-related activities) are permissible or impermissible within the new regulatory student-athlete time balance framework. Please note that this chart does not contain an exhaustive list of required activities and will be updated in the future as deemed appropriate by the conference office.

<b>Determining Whether Required Activities Can Occur Under New Time Balance Framework</b>					
<b>List of Activities</b>	<b>Countable Activity (CARA), Required Athletic Activity (RARA), or Voluntary Athletic Activity (VARA)?</b>	<b>8-Hour Overnight Period?</b>	<b>Required Weekly Day(s) Off?</b>	<b>Additional 14 Days Off?</b>	<b>Seven-Day Discretionary Period Following Championship Season?</b>
<b>Competition</b>	CARA	No	No	No	No
<b>Practice</b>	CARA	No	No	No	No
<b>Weight Training</b>	CARA	No	No	No	No
<b>Conditioning</b>	CARA	No	No	No	No
<b>Film Review</b>	CARA	No	No	No	No
<b>Team Meetings</b>	CARA	No	No	No	No

<b>Individual Meetings With Coach Involving Film Review, Chalk Talk, etc.</b>	CARA	No	No	No	No
<b>Individual Meetings with Coach Involving General Counseling Activities (No CARA)</b>	VARA	Yes but must be initiated by S-A	Yes but must be initiated by S-A	Yes but must be initiated by S-A	Yes but must be initiated by S-A
<b>Individual End-of-Season Meeting with Coach</b>	RARA	No	No	No	Yes
<b>Athletically Related Travel</b>	RARA	No	No	No	No
<b>Voluntary Athletic Activities</b>	VARA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Safety Exception Workouts With Coach Supervision</b>	VARA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Required Team Building Activities</b>	RARA	Yes	No	No	No
<b>Required Team Life Skills Sessions</b>	RARA	Yes	No	No	No
<b>Required Department-Wide Life Skills Sessions</b>	RARA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Team Promotional Activities (i.e., fan events, community appearances, video</b>	RARA	No	No	No	No

<b>or photo shoots, etc.)</b>					
<b>Medical Appointments / Assessments / Procedures</b>	RARA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Mental Health Evaluations</b>	RARA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Injury Rehab &amp; Treatment</b>	RARA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Preventative &amp; Recovery Treatment</b>	RARA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Team Nutrition Meetings</b>	RARA	No	No	No	No
<b>Individual Health &amp; Wellness Consultations</b>	RARA or VARA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Drug Testing</b>	RARA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Team Entertainment (Note: coach may arrange entertainment)</b>	VARA	No	Yes but must be voluntary	Yes but must be voluntary	Yes but must be voluntary
<b>Team Meals (e.g., training table)</b>	RARA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Meals &amp; Snacks Incidental to Participation</b>	RARA or VARA	Yes, but limited to takeout	Yes	Yes	Yes

		meals and snacks			
<b>Occasional Meals With Boosters and/or Coaches</b>	RARA	No	No	No	No
<b>End-of-Season Team Banquet</b>	RARA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>End-of-Year Department-Wide Celebratory Banquet</b>	RARA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Team Community Service Events <u>With</u> Coach and/or Administrator Involvement</b>	RARA	No	No	No	No
<b>Team Community Service Events <u>Without</u> Coach and/or Administrator Involvement</b>	VARA	Yes	Yes but must be voluntary	Yes but must be voluntary	Yes but must be voluntary
<b>Individual SA Community Service Event <u>Without</u> Coach and/or Administrator Involvement</b>	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Individual SA Community Service Event <u>With</u> Coach and/or</b>	N/A	Maybe*	Maybe*	Maybe*	Maybe*

<b>Administrator Involvement</b>					
<b>Student Host Duties</b>	RARA	Yes	No	No	No
<b>Voluntarily Serve as Student Host</b>	VARA	Yes	No	No	No
<b>Attending Meal with Prospect and Coach for Recruiting Purposes During Official &amp; Unofficial Visits</b>	RARA	Yes	No	No	No
<b>Attending Meal with Prospect During Official &amp; Unofficial Visit (Coach Not Present)</b>	VARA	Yes	Yes but must be initiated by S-As	Yes but must be initiated by S-As	Yes but must be initiated by S-As
<b>Contact with Prospects During Official or Unofficial Visit Without Coach Involvement</b>	VARA	Yes	Yes but must be solely initiated by S-As	Yes but must be solely initiated by S-As	Yes but must be solely initiated by S-As
<b>Team Compliance Meetings</b>	RARA	No	No	No	No
<b>Individual S-A Compliance Meetings involving Eligibility</b>	RARA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

<b>Voluntary Individual Compliance Meetings</b>	VARA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Team Promotional Activities</b>	RARA	No	No	No	No
<b>Team Promotional Practice Activity (e.g., midnight madness)</b>	CARA	Yes	No	No	No
<b>Team Fundraising Events</b>	RARA	No	No	No	No
<b>Required Sport-Specific Media Obligations</b>	RARA	No	No	No	No
<b>Individual Media Activities Without Initiation or Arrangement by Athletics Staff</b>	VARA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Meetings with Academic Advisors</b>	RARA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Academic Assessments</b>	RARA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Coach-Mandated Team Study Hall</b>	RARA	No	No	No	No
<b>Academic Advising-Mandated Team Study Hall</b>	RARA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>SAAC Meetings</b>	VARA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

<b>Outside Competition</b> (see Bylaw 17.31)	VARA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
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Legend:

CARA = Countable Athletically Related Activity

RARA = Required Athletically Related Activity

VARA = Voluntary Athletically Related Activity

Note:

\* = review necessary to determine if the activity is truly voluntary.

**Type:** Educational Column

**Title:** Proposal No. 2016-136 Autonomy Proposal -- Playing and Practice Seasons -- Additional Days Off During the Academic Year (I)

**Division:** I

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**Text:**

**Editor's Note:** This educational column was updated August 3, 2017, to assist the membership by clarifying the answers to Question Nos. 14, 15, 33, and 36 based on inquiries received by the membership after initial publication. Additionally, Question No. 37 was added for additional clarification. The initial published date was kept to link this educational column with other published question and answer columns associated with proposals adopted at the same time.

This document contains questions and answers to assist the NCAA membership in its understanding of Autonomy Proposal No. 2016-136 (additional days off during the academic year).

Seven-Day Discretionary Period

**Question No. 1:** Does the postseason, seven-day discretionary period apply even if a sport completes its season during a vacation period (e.g., winter, spring, summer) or institutional study or finals period?

**Answer:** Vacation days may be used to fulfill the required seven-day period. If the end of the season occurs during a vacation period that continues for at least seven consecutive days, those days fulfill the requirement. If study days and/or final examination days occur in the seven days immediately after the end of the season, they will be included in the discretionary period.

**Question No. 2:** If classes begin at any point during the seven-day postseason discretionary period, must those days be counted toward meeting the requirement?

**Answer:** Yes. The institution is required to apply the seven-day postseason discretionary period even if a vacation period immediately following the season is fewer than seven days. The institution would count the seven days immediately after the conclusion of the season, which shall include both vacation days and class days.

**Question No. 3:** If an institution's mandatory seven-day discretionary period ends in the middle of a week, must the institution still provide the regular two required days off as part of its outside the playing season segment per Bylaw 17.7.1.7.5? For example, if an institution's seven-day discretionary period runs Thursday-Wednesday, must the institution provide an additional two days off during the remainder of the week to satisfy Bylaw 17.7.1.7.5 (assuming a designated Saturday-Sunday week)?

**Answer:** Yes. Additional required days off provided under Proposal No. 2016-136 were intended to serve as new, required days off, therefore, meaning that an institution must continue to provide all other required days off.

**Question No. 4:** Will a student-athlete be allowed to meet with a coaching staff member for an end-of-season meeting during this seven-day discretionary period?

**Answer:** Individual end-of-season sessions with coaching staff members will be permissible during the seven-day discretionary period, provided the student-athlete and coach do not engage in any countable athletically related activities (e.g., film review, chalk talk, etc.).



**Question No. 5:** May a student-athlete whose sport permits coaches to be present for voluntary workouts via the safety exception still engage in voluntary workouts in the presence of a coaching staff member during the seven-day discretionary period?

**Answer:** Yes. A student-athlete in a sport that permits coaches to be present for voluntary workouts via the safety exception may still engage in voluntary workouts pursuant to the safety exception in the presence of coaching staff members during this period.

**Question No. 6:** During the seven-day postseason discretionary period, may an individual student-athlete or team participate in limited required athletically related activities as a result of their remarkable achievements during the season (e.g., winning a national championship, winning a national award)?

**Answer:** Required athletically related activities that celebrate and/or recognize the remarkable achievements of student-athletes (e.g., halftime recognition, media activities) are outside the scope of the legislation and may occur at the institution's discretion.

**Question No. 7:** May a team hold its end-of-year banquet during the required seven-day discretionary period?

**Answer:** Yes.

**Question No. 8:** May the institution hold an end-of-year, all-team celebratory banquet/awards ceremony during the required seven-day discretionary period?

**Answer:** Yes.

**Question No. 9:** How does the required seven-day discretionary period following the championship season apply to student-athletes in individual sports?

**Answer:** In individual sports, the days off must be provided on an individual basis once each individual student-athlete's season, including any postseason participation, is complete.

**Question No. 10:** If an institution has reason to believe the team will be selected for the NCAA championship and continues practice after their last competition, may the seven-day discretionary period start after selections?

**Answer:** Yes. If the team is not selected for the championship, the seven-day discretionary period must start the day after championship selections. If the team is selected, then the seven-day discretionary period would start after the team is eliminated from the championship.

**Question No. 11:** If an institution travels back to campus on the day following a student-athlete's or team's last contest of the championship segment, may that day count toward the mandatory seven-day discretionary period? For example, a team's last contest of the championship segment is on Monday night, but the team delays return travel and; therefore, does not return to campus until late Tuesday morning. May the institution consider Tuesday as a required day off and use that day towards the seven-day discretionary period?

**Answer:** No. If return to campus travel in conjunction with away-from-home competition occurs after 5 a.m., then the institution may not use that day as a required day off. Therefore, the institution's seven-day discretionary period would not begin until the day following the team's return to campus (i.e., Wednesday in the example provided above).

**Question No. 12:** In individual sports, may squad members considered necessary for effective practice by other student-athletes preparing for the NCAA championships continue to practice during the seven-day discretionary period following the conclusion of their respective playing seasons?

**Answer:** Yes. Squad members considered necessary for effective practice by the other student-athletes preparing for the NCAA championships may continue to practice during the seven-day discretionary period following the conclusion of their respective playing seasons, provided the student-athletes receive a seven-day discretionary period immediately following their final practice. For example, if a tennis student-athlete participates in five days of additional practice immediately following the conclusion of his or her playing season to assist a fellow student-athlete in his or her preparation for the NCAA championships, the student-athlete's seven-day discretionary period would begin immediately following his or her final practice that assists a teammate in preparation for the NCAA championships.

#### Additional 14 Required Days Off

**Question No. 13:** May an institution provide a student-athlete with any of the additional 14 required days off during vacation periods that occur during the playing season?

**Answer:** Yes. The institution may use any of the additional 14 required days off during a vacation period (e.g., summer, winter, spring vacation periods) that occurs during the declared playing season, including a preseason practice period before classes begin for a regular academic term, provided the additional days off count toward the playing season. For example, in basketball, days off provided during the winter vacation period may count toward the 14 additional days because the vacation period is part of the playing season.

**Question No. 14:** Pursuant to the legislation that governs the counting of days (e.g., 132/144/156) toward a season in sports other than basketball and football, it is permissible to exclude days of vacation, holiday and final exam periods during which no practice or competition occurs from counting toward the limit of days in the season. If an institution excludes such days from its season, may those days also be counted toward the 14 additional required days off?

**Answer:** No. Days that are excluded from counting towards the 132/144/156 may not be used towards the 14 additional days off. For example, if an institution's swimming team provides five days off from countable and required athletically related activity during the institution's final exam period and excludes those days from its 144-day season, those days may not be used towards the 14 additional days off.

**Question No. 15:** May an institution provide student-athletes with any of the additional 14 required days off during a vacation period that occurs outside the playing season during a regular academic term or between regular academic terms (e.g., fall break, spring break)?

**Answer:** No. Outside the playing season, additional days off may only be provided during a regular academic term while classes are in session.

**Question No. 16:** May an institution provide student-athletes with any of the additional 14 required days off during participation in a conference or postseason championship, NCAA championship, postseason bowl game, or National Invitational Tournament?

**Answer:** Yes. An institution may count a day without required athletically related activities during participation in a conference or postseason championship, NCAA championship, postseason bowl game, or National Invitational Tournament toward the additional 14 days off requirement since the institution is not otherwise required to provide a day off during weeks that include those events.

**Question No. 17:** May an institution provide student-athletes with any of the additional 14 required days off during a weekend (i.e., Saturday or Sunday)?

**Answer:** Yes.

**Question No. 18:** May an institution provide student-athletes with any of the additional 14 required days off during a study or final exam period that occurs during the playing season?

**Answer:** Yes. An institution may provide student-athletes with any of the additional 14 required days off during a study or final exam period that occurs during the declared playing season.

**Question No. 19:** May an institution provide student-athletes with any of the additional 14 required days off during a study or final exam period that occurs outside the playing season?

**Answer:** No. An institution may not count one of the additional 14 required days off when the day is already required to be free of required athletically related activities.

**Question No. 20:** May an institution provide a student-athlete with any of the additional 14 required days off during a study or final exam period that occurs outside the playing season if the student-athlete does not have finals or has finished his or her finals for the term?

**Answer:** No.

**Question No. 21:** Must the additional 14 days be consecutive?

**Answer:** No. The days may be provided individually or consecutively.

**Question No. 22:** In football, may an institution utilize days within its designated spring discretionary weeks to satisfy the 14 additional days off requirement?

**Answer:** Yes, provided those days are free from all required athletically related activities.

**Question No. 23:** In the case of a multisport student-athlete, would the institution be required to provide the student-athlete with 14 additional days off for each sport in which he or she participates?

**Answer:** No. In the case of a multisport student-athlete, the institution would be required to provide a minimum of 14 additional days off over the course of the academic year while classes are in session, regardless of the number of sports in which he or she participates.

**Question No. 24:** In the case of a multisport student-athlete, is the student-athlete prohibited from participating in required athletically related activities in a different sport during the seven-day discretionary period for another sport (e.g., cross country, indoor track, outdoor track)?

**Answer:** No. The student-athlete would be allowed to participate in required athletically related activities in a different sport during the seven-day discretionary period for another sport. For example, a student-athlete who recently completed his or her season in indoor track and field would be permitted to participate in required athletically related activities in outdoor track and field during the seven-day discretionary period following the end of the indoor track and field season.

**Question No. 25:** Must an institution provide the same 14 days off to all members of a particular team?

**Answer:** No. The 14 days may be selected and provided on an individual student-athlete basis.

**Question No. 26:** May an institution adjust or prorate the number of additional days off that must be provided to a student-athlete for a student-athlete who joins a team mid-year?

**Answer:** Yes, an institution may prorate the number of additional days off provided to a student-athlete who joins a team mid-year; however, a student-athlete who joins a team mid-year must, at a minimum, be provided at least 7 additional days off during the rest of the regular academic year when classes are in session.

#### Required Day Off

**Question No. 27:** Do the limitations on required athletically related activities during a day off apply during the summer, outside of a sport's declared playing and practice season?

**Answer:** No, the limitations on required athletically related activities do not apply outside of the regular academic year, except during the eight-hour overnight period, unless a sport is within its declared playing and practice season.

**Question No. 28:** Does the restriction on required athletically related activities during the eight-hour overnight period apply during the summer?

**Answer:** Yes, the restriction on required athletically related activities during the eight-hour overnight period applies throughout the year, including during the summer.

**Question No. 29:** Do the limitations on required athletically related activities apply during summer access activities in the sports of football and basketball?

**Answer:** No, the limitations on required athletically related activities do not apply outside of the regular academic year, except during the eight-hour overnight period, unless a sport is within its declared playing and practice season.

**Question 30:** Do the limitations on required athletically related activities during a day off apply during practice associated with a foreign tour?

**Answer:** No, the limitations on required athletically related activities do not apply outside of the regular academic year, except during the eight-hour overnight period, unless a sport is within its declared playing and practice season.

**Question No. 31:** May a student-athlete participate in a scheduled meal (e.g., training table, meal or snack incidental to participation) during a designated day off?

**Answer:** Yes. A student-athlete may attend a scheduled meal during a designated day off.

**Question No. 32:** May a student-athlete voluntarily engage in activities that are generally considered to be required athletically related activities during a required day off?

**Answer:** Yes; however, such activity must be solely initiated and requested by the student-athlete and institutional staff members may not observe or otherwise be involved in arranging the student-athlete's participation in the activity. Further, consistent with Bylaw 17.02.18, the student-athlete may not be required to report back any information related to the activity to an institutional staff member, the student-athlete's participation in the activity may not be recorded for the purpose of reporting such information to a coaching staff member, and the student-athlete may not be subject to penalty for failing to participate in the activity.

**Question No. 33:** May a student-athlete voluntarily engage in recruiting activities (e.g. contact with a prospective student-athlete during an official or unofficial visit) during a required day off?

**Answer:** Yes; however, such activity must be solely initiated by the student-athlete and institutional staff members may not observe or otherwise be involved in arranging the student-athlete's participation in the activity.

**Question No. 34:** May a student-athlete voluntarily serve as a student-host during a required day off?

**Answer:** No.

**Question No. 35:** May a student-athlete continue student-hosting activity overnight and into the next morning when the following day is considered a required day off? For example, if a student-athlete serves as a student-host on a weekend (Saturday-Sunday) visit, may the student-athlete continue to serve as the student-host Saturday night and into Sunday morning if Sunday is considered a required day off?

**Answer:** Yes, a student-athlete may continue to serve as the student-host overnight and into the beginning of the next day to complete his or her student-hosting duties without such activity being considered required athletically related activity, provided the student-athlete has been designated as the official student-host per Bylaw 13.6.7.5 and the student-athlete concludes such activity as soon as possible. Therefore, using the above example, a student-athlete may continue to serve as the student-host Saturday night and into Sunday morning so long as the student-athlete is the designated host and such hosting activity is concluded as soon as possible on Sunday.

**Question No. 36:** May a student-athlete voluntarily engage in institutional promotional activities (e.g. team fundraising, marketing events, community service, etc.) during a required day off?

**Answer:** Yes; however, such activity must be solely initiated by the student-athlete and institutional staff members may not observe or otherwise be involved in arranging the student-athlete's participation in the activity.

**Question No. 37:** May a student-athlete participate in media activities (e.g., conference media day, television/radio interviews, coach's show, etc.) during a required day off?

**Answer:** No, such media activities are considered required athletically related activities and may not occur on a required day off.

**Question No. 38:** May a student-athlete voluntarily engage in permissible entertainment activities during a required day off?

**Answer:** Yes, provided the student-athlete's participation is not required by an institutional staff member. An institutional staff member may however be involved in arranging the voluntary entertainment activity and may be present during the activity so long as the staff member's attendance is solely to administer the activity and the staff member does not record student-athletes' attendance or report information related to the activity back to a coach or other institutional staff member.

**Question No. 39:** Are student-athletes permitted to participate in Student-Athlete Advisory Committee activities during the additional days off (i.e., seven-day period and the additional 14 days) when required athletically related activities are prohibited?

**Answer:** Yes.

**Question No. 40:** May an institution require student-athletes to attend stretching, recovery, rehabilitative, or therapeutic sessions on a required day off?

**Answer:** Yes, such medically-related activities may be conducted on a required day off provided the institution's sports medicine staff prescribes the session as medically necessary (as opposed to strength building or performance enhancing), the session is directed by a member of the institution's sports medicine team and conducted by an individual with certification to conduct such sessions, and no other sport-specific staff member is present.

**Question No. 41:** May an institution utilize a day in which a team is away from campus in conjunction with away-from-home competition as a required day off if no athletically related activities or other required athletically related activities occur during the day?

**Answer:** No.

**Question No. 42:** May an institution utilize a day in which a team is away from campus in conjunction with an extended, away-from-home practice or competition trip (e.g. any trip that is seven days or longer) as a required day off if no athletically related activities or other required athletically related activities occur during the day?

**Answer:** No.

**Question No. 43:** May an institution use a day a team is away from campus in conjunction with an extended, away-from-home practice trip (e.g., any trip that is seven days or longer) that occurs during the preseason prior to the start of classes (e.g., football off-campus, preseason training trip) as a required day off if no athletically related activities or other required athletically related activities occur during the day?

**Answer:** No.

**Notice about Educational Columns:** Educational columns and hot topics are intended to assist the membership with the correct application of legislation and/or interpretations by providing clarifications, reminders and examples. They are based on legislation and official and staff interpretations applicable at the time of publication. Therefore, educational columns and hot topics are binding to the extent that the legislation and interpretations on which they are based remain applicable. Educational columns are posted on a regular basis to address a variety of issues and hot topics are posted as necessary in order to address timely issues.

## Legislative References

Legislative Cite	Title
17.1.7	Time Limits for Athletically Related Activities.
17.02	Definitions and Applications.
17.1.7.8.1	Multisport Student-Athletes.
17.1.7.8.2	Exception -- Quarter Institutions.
17.1.7.8	Additional Required Days Off.
17.1.7.6.3	Preseason Practice.

<b>Legislative Cite</b>	<b>Title</b>
17.1.7.6	Required Day Off -- Playing Season.
17.1.7.6.1	Travel Day.
17.1.7.6.1.1	Exception -- Return Travel Following Away-From-Home Competition -- Midnight to 5 a.m.
17.1.7.8.3	Exception -- Life-Skills Activities Involving Multiple Sports.

#### **RSRO Cases**

<b>Case Type</b>	<b>Case Count</b>
Legislative Relief Waiver	1

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