



Sport • Psych news



Welcome Freshmen Wildcats!

Hi Wildcats,

As the Sport and Clinical Psychologist for the student-athletes, I wanted to introduce myself and discuss a few things. Throughout the year, I will be sending emails on a variety of mental training topics such as improving focus, increasing confidence, developing performance routines, managing your anger, minimizing anxiety, and dealing with stress.

The first edition of these emails is about your first year as a Wildcat. Your first year is a very exciting time for student-athletes and it is also one of emotional, academic, financial, and time commitment adjustments. Here are a few main areas to begin thinking about:

As a Student:

- Entering your freshman year will include many academic changes. Though you will find your classes to be more stimulating, they will also be more demanding of your time and energy than ever before. Because of your athletic responsibilities, you may have to miss classes and reschedule assignments due to travel.
 - As a result, management of your time and schedule will be more crucial than ever before. It is important to enjoy your time here but remember to take care of your obligations first.
- Maintaining eligibility is key. But, earning a college degree is vital. 92% of high school athletes do not make it to the professional level.

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As an Athlete:

- Let's face it: you were a "Star" in high school. It is one of the reasons we are excited to have you here. As an athlete in an elite NCAA Division I sport, your teammates will also be "stars" from their high schools. For the first time, you may be playing alongside and competing against people who are as good as you. Some may even be better.
 - Embrace this challenge but be mindful not to place too much pressure on yourself during the beginning stages of your Wildcat career.
- It is common for many new athletes to enter college believing they are going to begin where they left off in high school. However, some of you may have less of an opportunity to participate than you desire. It is not uncommon for freshman to not travel with the team, not dress for certain events, or even be red shirted.
 - Don't fret. Having a little more time to adjust is a good thing. Though it may not be immediate, you will have your chance to make your mark as a Wildcat. Be patient, continue to learn from your new team, and when the opportunity strikes, be prepared.

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Formation of New Relationships:

- **With Coaches:** The recruiting process is over. Your coaches are still excited about having you here. Now that they are your coach, your relationship with them may be different.
 - Remember, it took years for you and your high school/club coach to form the relationship you have. It may take some time to form a similar relationship with your new coach.
- **With Other Students:** Your experience as a student-athlete at The University of Arizona is going to be unique from most of the students with whom you share classes.

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- Not everyone on campus places sports as high as a priority as you do. There is a reason "student" comes first in "student-athlete."
- If someone tries to insult you with name calling such as "dumb jock," don't take it personally. They are only displaying their own ignorance to how hard you work managing both your sport and your studies.
- As a student-athlete, your peers may grant you "celebrity status." Being in the lime light means both positive and negative reactions from others.

- Consider that people will be talking about you and your actions on and off the playing surface. Be a good representative of Wildcats Athletics and remember you are always in uniform.

Exploring a New World

- For many of you, this is the first time living away from home. Whether you are moving across the country or across the street to be here, it means getting adjusted to new places, new foods, new friends, and even a new bed.
 - Remember, change may be initially uncomfortable but you will adjust with time. Just ask a sophomore.

The University of Arizona athletic department is one of a few athletic departments in the nation to provide psychological services to its student-athletes. If you are feeling overwhelmed, exhausted, stressed out, frustrated, worried, angry, sad, or lacking confidence, please don't hesitate to utilize these services. Research has shown how distracting some of these issues can be and how that can impact your performance. So, never underestimate the benefit of spending 45 minutes flushing things out with a trained professional. If I can be of any assistance, please don't hesitate to schedule an appointment with me.

Welcome to The University of Arizona and BEAR DOWN!

Sincerely,

Scott Goldman, Ph.D.

*Sport and Clinical Psychologist
for Student-Athletes*

To schedule an appointment, call 621-8805, 621-3334, or ask your athletic trainer for assistance.