



COMMON UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE QUESTIONS ABOUT STUDENT ATHLETE SCHOLARSHIPS

http://english.cis-sic.ca/information/student-athlete_info/athletes_guide

1. WHAT DOES USPORT MEAN AND WHO ARE THEY?

- USport, is the Canadian Inter-University Sport organization formerly known as CIS.
- In Canada, there are two associations that oversee university athletics: [U SPORTS](#) and the [Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association \(CCAA\)](#). U SPORTS calls its athletic scholarship awards “Athletic Financial Awards” (AFAs) and defines them like this:
 - An AFA is any award that is conditional to being listed on the Official U SPORTS Eligibility Certificate and administered by the university’s awards office consistent with the awarding university’s policies. These awards include but are not limited to, scholarships, bursaries, prizes, leadership awards, merit awards, housing, and all other related non-employment financial benefit received by an athlete from their institution.
- Simply put, an athletic scholarship can be made up of a variety of sources and it will be up to each institution’s coach to grant you any number of these available awards.
- USport is made up of four different athletic divisions representing all the universities across Canada.
 1. Atlantic University Sport (AUS)
 2. Quebec Student Sports Federation (QSSF)
 3. Ontario University Athletics (OUA)
 4. Canada West (CW)

2. DO CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES OFFER STUDENT-ATHLETE SCHOLARSHIPS?

Canadian schools do offer athletic scholarship money for their athletes.

- Tuition and compulsory fees are the maximum amount an athlete can receive for athletic-related awards in an academic year, including athletic-related bursaries.
- The value and quantity of athletic-related awards and bursaries available varies from institution to institution.
- Specific awards and bursaries may have additional conditions, such as academic success and citizenship.
- Many awards, such as academic awards or awards provided by Sport Governing Bodies or the Federal and Provincial Governments, are not included within the tuition and compulsory fees maximum.
- The athlete is eligible to receive an award or bursary at the beginning of their first year (September) at a university if they have a minimum entering average of 80% or equivalent. Alternatively, the athlete is eligible to receive an award at the end of their first year at a university (spring or summer) if they satisfy [USports](#) academic requirements with at least a 65% average or equivalent. Thereafter, the athlete is eligible to receive an award at the

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beginning of any year if they satisfy U Sports academic requirements with at least a 65% average or equivalent in the preceding year.

3. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO RECEIVE A CANADIAN ‘FULL RIDE’ SCHOLARSHIP?

- In the Canadian system, a full-ride scholarship means that your tuition fees will be fully paid for. Anything billed by the university, such as textbooks, will be covered too. **Tuition plus mandatory fees is the maximum coverage a student can receive in Canada; housing and other living expenses cannot be paid for.** While these are the rules set out by the Canadian system, each province and each individual institution can impose even stricter guidelines. As well each individual university has their own rules and the right to reserve how much funding is available and can be given to their athletes.
- Partial scholarships (any denomination other than a “full-ride”) can range from under a thousand dollars up to the total cost of tuition and mandatory university fees. According to MacLean’s, tuition in most provinces is over \$5,000 a year, the average Canadian sports scholarship is \$1,060.
- If your university fees cost \$5,500 a year and you were to receive a full scholarship, this fee would be covered. But, a partial scholarship of say, \$2,000 a year, would leave you to pay the outstanding \$3,500.

4. WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?

- The scholarships offered in Canada are fully reliant on funding, which every university receives in different ways. Some universities provide scholarships through their operating budgets, there may be donors that hand out scholarships as they please, and alumni may even donate to a portion of the funding.
- It’s also important to note that it’s common for athletes to ask coaches how much the program has to offer and what types of different scholarships are available. The value of a scholarship for any prospective student-athlete may vary from institution to institution, depending on budget, athletic performance, and other factors the coach considers.

5. WHY DON’T STUDENT-ATHLETE SCHOLARSHIPS COVER ALL COSTS TO ENROLL IN UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGES LIKE THE NCAA IN THE UNITED STATES?

- A USport athletic scholarship can be made up from a variety of different sources including, scholarships, bursaries, prizes, leadership awards, merit awards, housing and all other non-employment financial benefit received by an athlete from their institution, However, the total sum of Athletic scholarships in the USport is limited to a maximum of tuition plus compulsory fees in an academic year.
- The reality for Canadian student athletes is that no major media entity in Canada has fully invested in USports. Until this changes, and the potential for revenue growth develops – therefore allowing for more financial rewards, the system is what it is.
- It will take a massive growth in popularity and consumption nationwide of Canadian university sports.
- Increasing the number of available scholarships starts at the national level with USports, not just the conference or even individual institution level.

6. WHAT IS THE AMOUNT UNIVERSITIES/COLLEGES OUTSIDE OF ONTARIO AWARD STUDENT ATHLETES?

- Universities outside of Ontario can cover the student athletes entire Tuition.
- Each university outside of Ontario has a different tuition so please refer to your choice of institution to enquire.
- Tuition and compulsory fees in an academic year are the only things which can be covered under the present rules.

7. WHAT IS THE MAXIMUM A UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE CAN AWARD A STUDENT-ATHLETE IN ONTARIO? (OUA – Ontario University Athletics)

- The maximum award a student athlete is eligible to receive under OUA rules is \$4,500/yr.
- Student athletes are still eligible for other scholarships and bursaries. Any awards a student could receive which are university wide, like an entrance scholarship, are also available for student athletes.
- The OUA requires an athlete to maintain a 70% grade point average or equivalent to be eligible for student athlete awards in their subsequent years of eligibility.
- Athletic performance is also a key factor that contributes to the amount of the scholarship money an athlete can receive. Generally, the higher the fitness level, the higher the completed passing percentage is, or more passes intercepted/tackles can result in a larger scholarship for you, but it is important to contact coaches and universities you are interested in to see how much you can be offered in their specific program.

8. DO ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES HAVE A CAP ON THE NUMBER OF SCHOLARSHIPS PERMITTED THROUGHOUT THEIR ATHLETIC PROGRAM? (OUA – Ontario University Athletics)

- Yes, they do. The OUA has a cap which specifies schools are only allowed to reward 70% of the team sport championship roster.
- For each of the Men's & Women's Soccer this means a roster of 18 players each.
- If fully funded by the institution for Men's and Women's Soccer this would be 12.6 for each gender.

9. WHAT GRADE POINT AVERAGE DOES AN ATHLETE NEED TO MAINTAIN TO THEIR STUDENT ATHLETE SCHOLARSHIP?

- The OUA requires an athlete to maintain a 70% average or equivalent to be eligible for student athlete awards in their subsequent years of eligibility.
- Outside of Ontario, Universities/Colleges require an athlete to maintain a 65% average or equivalent to be eligible for athletic financial awards.

10. ARE STUDENT ATHLETE SCHOLARSHIPS FOR THE ENTIRE 4 YEARS?

- Even though some student-athletes may qualify for a scholarship, they are not guaranteed. Coaches have a huge influence in who receives an award, based on their own coaching philosophy and the amount of money allocated to the sport.
- Student athletes must maintain a minimum grade point average of 70% for institutions within Ontario and 65% GPA for institutions outside of Ontario.

11. CAN MY SCHOLARSHIP BE TAKEN AWAY?

- While there is a possibility of this happening make sure you understand the terms of your scholarship contract, so you are not taken by surprise if this happens.

- One season you may have an athletic scholarship, the next you may not. The university you attend is under no obligation to renew your athletic scholarship, since scholarships are based on a yearly contract. Your future coach is free to renew or pull your scholarship.
- One guarantee of losing your funding is not meeting the academic grade point average for a student athlete. You must maintain a minimum grade point average of 70% for institutions within Ontario and 65% GPA for institutions outside of Ontario.
- As a student athlete you need to maintain certain academic standards to be eligible for prize money (previously mentioned). As well if you become injured outside of university you may also lose your scholarship. Partaking in risky behaviour such as rock climbing may result in receiving an injury outside of practice and therefore an unhappy coach. Dependent on how severe the injury is, the consequence could be the loss of a scholarship.
- There is also a possibility of your scholarship increasing if you perform well! Keep up the grind. It will pay off!

12. DO ATHLETES RECEIVE ANY SPECIAL ACADEMIC BENEFITS AT UNIVERSITY/COLLEGES?

- Yes, they do. Student Athletes have the advantage of course selection before other students enrolled.
- Student Athletes have access to additional tutoring support for free provided by the athletic department.
- Student Athletes are teamed up with others who are in the same stream in order to assist with any and all questions regarding the academic programs
- Student Athletes have time arranged with alumni who can open doors to future opportunities.

13. WHAT HAPPENS IF I HAVE A CONFLICT BETWEEN CLASS AND TEAM PRACTICE/GAME?

- Class will always take priority over sport without question.
- Student Athletes will be given priority to adjust their classes and labs to not conflict with the pre-determined practice times of the soccer team.
- Coaches do understand when there is no solution to the conflict the academics must come first. Alternate arrangements for what you missed at training can be discussed with the coach.

14. WHAT STREAM SHOULD I BE TAKING IN HIGHSCHOOL TO BE QUALIFY FOR ADMISSIONS TO A CANADIAN UNIVERSITY?

- Academic – If the student plans to attend university in the future, entering the academic stream is compulsory.

15. WHAT TYPE OF PLAYERS ARE UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE COACHES LOOKING FOR?

- University coaches are looking for students who are good people who have demonstrated they can manage their time to balance a demanding academic workload and athletic lifestyle.
- Student athletes who take their academics seriously and have set goals for themselves to achieve.
- Individuals who are a team player who helps drive the program to success on the field and in the classroom.
- Individuals who show more skills than just on the field of play. They must fit the culture of the coach and program as the team is a family for 4 years. Individuals who love the game and have the character and values inline with everyone else on the team.

- Athletes who have the fitness levels of a demanding training schedule and season to survive and have shown in Club soccer they can train 4x a week.
- Athletes who have the game intelligence to have an impact in their primary position and can play a secondary position when needed to.
- Coaches want student athletes who are coachable, low maintenance, driven to improve and encouraging with a positive attitude on and off the bench.

16. WHEN & HOW LONG IS THE UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE SEASON?

- The Pre-Season begins in the first week of August.
- The Fall League Season begins by September Labour Day Weekend.
- The Fall Season ends for those who do not make the playoffs last week in October.
- The Playoffs begins last weekend in October first week of November.
- Championship is mid November.
- Indoor/Spring Season begins Mid January to April.

17. WHEN ARE UNIVERISTY/COLELGE LEAGUE GAMES?

- League games are played on weekends Saturday and Sunday.
- In recent years there has been a change in Ontario to compete on Friday & Sunday so there is a 24hr break between games to rest and recover

18. DO ATHLETES RECEIVE ANY SPECIAL ATHLETIC BENEFITS AT UNIVERSITY/COLLEGES?

- Most schools have a contract with an equipment supplier and all the equipment is supplied by the institution which you may keep with the exception of the full uniform
- Athletic Departments will cover all travel to and from, hotel accommodation and meals while staying overnight.
- Athletic Department will cover travel to and from and one meal prior or post-game for local games

19. HOW COMPETITIVE IS COLLEGIATE/VARSITY SPORTS?

- Competing at university or college is one of the most demanding moments in your life. You are expected to follow all of the academic requirements of a student enrolled in your institution and play a sport which takes a special time management skills to accomplish.
- You train 4x/week and play 2 games a week with one day off.
- You will attend classes most of the day and then attend training for 90min to 2hrs on the field plus 30min to a 1hr to arrive & depart, time in the medical training pre and post training/game. Follow up with something to eat and then study when exhausted. More than most students in your institution.
- The competition level is fierce. Up to 25 players can be on the roster all the best players from their own Club teams working towards proving they deserve a starting 11 position.
- The games are not only physically demanding on the body but mentally as well.
- The speed of thought and speed in action is intense and higher than most will experience in Club soccer as you are playing with individuals who can be up to 4 years older than you in your first year. They also have 3 to 4 years experience under them.

20. WHAT IF I DON'T GET AN ATHLETIC SCHOLARSHIP?

- Not to worry! Universities offer several other awards to incoming students, such as academic success scholarships, citizen scholarships and international scholarships. Be sure to explore the websites of the universities you are interested in to discover other financial aid and scholarship options.

Playing at university or college either in Canada or in the United States is a major accomplishment in your life and one which you will never forget as it provides so many experiences. Those skills and experiences will be recognized by future employers who are seeking out individuals who have demonstrated they can manage such a demanding schedule as a student athlete.

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