

# Top Ten Things NOT To Do When The NCAA Comes Knocking

## 1. **DON'T PANIC!**

You need to review and follow the institution's investigative protocols.

## 2. **DON'T CHALLENGE THE NCAA INVESTIGATOR TO AN ARM WRESTLING CONTEST TO DETERMINE IF AN INVESTIGATION IS NECESSARY!**

The NCAA Staff made a decision to conduct interviews and it will happen. Gather as much information as possible from the NCAA representative during these initial contacts.

## 3. **DON'T LET THE INVOLVED COACH CONDUCT HIS/HER OWN INVESTIGATION!**

The institution should conduct the inquiry (possibly in conjunction with the NCAA) and may need outside investigative assistance to assure that the inquiry is independent and credible. You must decide the extent (if any) of the information to provide the coaching staff, but the investigation by the NCAA and the university cannot be compromised.

## 4. **DON'T CLAIM YOUR COACH OR STUDENT-ATHLETE IS INNOCENT OR GUILTY WITHOUT OBTAINING ALL AVAILABLE INFORMATION!**

Neither the university nor the NCAA should take an immediate position and, assuming that a student-athlete's eligibility is not an issue, the university should not state any opinion/beliefs on the information. How you react (e.g., "there is no possible way that a violation occurred") may dictate the amount of information you will receive from the NCAA.

## 5. **DON'T RENT A DOCUMENT SHREDDER!**

Don't try to hide any relevant documents. It will only add to your institution's problems. Your institution's failure to provide relevant information also could influence the level of cooperation you receive from the NCAA.

## 6. **DON'T TELL YOUR STUDENT-ATHLETES OR COACHES WHAT TO SAY (OR ENCOURAGE THEM TO TAKE A REALLY LONG SPRING BREAK!)**

Unavailability is not a valid excuse and the investigator probably will ask about conversations between the witness and others during the past few days. Obtain counsel for the student-athlete, if necessary.

## 7. **DON'T DEMAND (OR EXPECT) ANSWERS TO ALL YOUR QUESTIONS!**

The objective of the NCAA's interviews on campus is to obtain information, not to discuss how the case will be processed over the next few months. The investigator will not have answers to some questions because the answers will depend on the assembled information — information that has not yet been obtained.

## 8. **DON'T BRING YOUR BOARD OF TRUSTEES, SENIOR STAFF MEMBERS, AND THE CHEERLEADING SQUAD TO THE INTERVIEWS!**

Keep the number of individuals involved with the interviews and the inquiry to a minimum. The institution should have procedures in place and they should be followed when this type of situation arises.

## 9. **DON'T APPEAR ON ESPN'S "SPORT CENTER" ANNOUNCING THAT THE UNIVERSITY IS UNDER INQUIRY!**

The university's investigative protocols should also address the possible public release of information concerning the inquiry. At a minimum, the appropriate university media relations officer should be alerted and a draft statement should be prepared in the event circumstances warrant the release of some information.

## 10. **DON'T BE INTIMIDATED BY THE PROCESS!**

You have a right as a member of the NCAA and a responsibility as an employee of the university to ask questions of the NCAA. Try to determine the extent of the information reported and the NCAA's investigative efforts to date. Do not be afraid to ask the NCAA Staff about the status of the case on a frequent basis.