



**BEST PRACTICE: NAVIGATING THE NCAA ELIGIBILITY CENTER
ACADEMIC CERTIFICATION PROCESS
FOR ONLINE COURSES TAKEN THROUGH A
TEXAS VIRTUAL SCHOOL NETWORK (TxVSN) PROVIDER DISTRICT**

NCAA ELIGIBILITY CENTER HISTORY

The NCAA Eligibility Center began operation in November 2007, succeeding the old NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse in Iowa City, Iowa. The Eligibility Center is tasked with certifying the academic and amateur credentials of all college-bound student-athletes who wish to compete in NCAA Division I and II athletics.

NCAA regulations are set by NCAA colleges and universities and require all incoming student-athletes to meet a prescribed level of academic performance while maintaining their amateur status before entering college. The Eligibility Center collects data from high schools, sport-sanctioning bodies, and high school student-athletes in order to make eligibility decisions. The Eligibility Center recognizes that the high school and its employees are an essential part of the certification process.

NCAA APPROVAL PROCESS FOR HIGH SCHOOLS AND PROVIDERS

It must first be noted that for high school courses to be used in the NCAA academic certification process, high schools and providers must go through a two phase approval process. First, the Eligibility Center staff determines whether it is appropriate for a high school or program to establish a list of approved core courses. Second, individual core courses are reviewed for alignment with NCAA core course legislation.

TxVSN PROVIDER DISTRICTS

Each TxVSN Provider district is responsible for working with the Eligibility Center to establish its own **list of approved core courses** (formerly known as 48H). While the creation of a list specific to a particular Provider district might prove beneficial to students, as well as for the Provider district in terms of interest in their courses, the creation of this list is **not** mandatory.

If a Provider district chooses to work with the Eligibility Center to gain approval for its own **list of approved core courses**, this designation should be entered into the TxVSN course catalog for each approved course under the heading 'NCAA Approved Course'. If the course is included on the **list of approved core courses**, the Provider district should select 'Yes' in response to this item. If the course does not appear on the **list of approved core courses**, select 'No'.

TxVSN RECEIVER DISTRICTS

After discussions with Eligibility Center staff, the following suggestion is made in an effort to avoid potential uncertainty about TxVSN online courses listed on a student-athlete's Academic Achievement Record (AAR). After a student has completed a TxVSN course, and when it is time to submit a student-athlete's AAR to the Eligibility Center, attach a copy of the TxVSN Provider district's online course grade report. This attached documentation will assist the Certification Staff in finding the correct **list of approved core courses**, verifying that the online course has met NCAA standards, thus expediting review of the student-athlete's AAR. Again, attaching a copy of the grade report is **not** mandatory; however, this additional piece of documentation will assist the Certification Staff and keep the NCAA review process moving forward.

Please remember that the Eligibility Center is required to verify both the academic level of the course as well as each student's performance in the course. High schools and students should be prepared to provide supporting information about the student's performance in the course if requested. Additionally, the ultimate responsibility for student-athlete eligibility rests with the TxVSN Receiver district and the student-athlete. When selecting TxVSN courses for student-athletes, special attention should be given to selecting course(s) that appear on a **list of approved core courses**.

For further information on initiating a **list of approved core courses**, the NCAA review process, or questions regarding a college bound student-athlete, contact the NCAA Eligibility Center, Client Relations department at 877-622-2321.