

NFL Continuing Education Program-On the Move

The NFL and the National Association of Academic Advisors for Athletics (N4A) are partners in providing continuing education opportunities for the NFL players who have yet to earn their undergraduate degree or who wish to pursue an advanced degree.

With the NFL off-season upon us, we are excited to be assisting another crop of NFL players back to the classroom. With your assistance we can make 2008 a banner year for the NFL and the N4A! Here are a few of steps that you can take to get involved with assisting players from your institution back to school:

1. Contact the NFL Continuing Education Program to receive a comprehensive list of NFL players from your institution who have yet to earn their undergraduate degree. Collaborate with the NFL Continuing Education Program to develop individualized strategies to recruit players back to school;
2. Conduct an exit interview with all junior and senior year football student-athletes seeking to play in the NFL. Exchange updated contact information and encourage them to pay their bills, fees, tickets and/or fines to the school before they leave campus. Upon leaving the institution, keep a record of the student-athlete's remaining degree requirements in the event that he initiates an interest in completing his degree;
3. Utilize the NFL-N4A Advisory Committee members to get ideas and assistance with reconnecting with your former student-athletes. The committee is a resource that can help with your institution's APR process.

HOW THE NFL CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM WORKS

The NFL staff contacts colleges/universities after receiving a transcript release form from the player in order to discuss options that they might have to return to the classroom. Tom Kowalski, the President of The Transit Group, is the NFL's educational consultant who serves as a liaison between the NFL and academic advisors. Once the player has expressed an interest in pursuing a degree, Tom contacts the player's academic advisor to find out his remaining degree requirements and options for completion. Typically, most first and second year players are required to stay in the franchise city to participate in the off-season training workouts. Therefore, it's highly unlikely that they will have an opportunity to return to campus. Tom, the player, and the club Player Development Director work with athletic academic advisors to identify options that works best for all parties.

NFL-N4A ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The NFL-N4A Advisory Committee is charged with creating degree completion opportunities for collegiate non-graduates who have pursued a professional sports career. The committee endeavors to complete this task by forging relationships between N4A members, NFL Player Development, and The Transit Group. Furthermore, the committee provides the NFL Player Development Department with advice and counsel in matters related to the NFL Continuing Education Program and acts on behalf of, and as advocates for, the NFL-N4A Advisory Committee and its initiatives.

Committee Chairs:

Demetrius Marlowe – North Carolina State University
Mike Casillas – University of California, Los Angeles

Committee Members:

James Hamad – University of Pittsburgh
Wally Richardson – University of Georgia
Melissa Dawson – University of Iowa
Bryan Maggard – University of Missouri
Teresa Turner – University of Oklahoma
Johnnie Smith – Tennessee State University

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