

**OTERO COLLEGE**  
**Athletics**  
**2023-2024**



**STUDENT-ATHLETE**  
**HANDBOOK/CODE OF CONDUCT**

# MESSAGE FROM THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

Welcome to Otero College -- you are now a part of the Rattler Family! The Otero College Athletic Department adamantly pursues excellence on the playing field and in the classroom. Our quest has been supported by faculty, staff, coaches, and administrators who have all worked together to help our student-athletes, both past and present, succeed in their sport and life. This is our mission for you!

We are committed to our student-athletes to help them grow as people, in the classroom, and the athletic arena. Beyond the faculty, staff, coaches, and administrators, this campus is deeply ingrained in the community, for whom we thank, along with our corporate sponsors, for their continued support. It is not simply through the people on campus who have helped Otero College to compete at the highest level possible, it is through everyone around us who proudly represents Otero.

An exciting year lies ahead for all our teams and student-athletes. While there is a high academic standard, along with an intense level of competition, I know all of you will rise to the top with your hard work and dedication to becoming the best that you can be.

Being involved in collegiate athletics is one of life's highest honors, and the friendships and memories you build here will last a lifetime. Take advantage of the opportunity you must be the best that you can be in the classroom, in the athletic arena, and life.

Best of Luck,

Gary Addington

## **Otero College Mission Statement:**

To educate students and provide workforce training that enhances personal and professional growth in a learning environment that facilitates maintaining high academic standards, relationship building, academic and emotional support, and encourages all students to become the best version of themselves.



## **Athletic Code of Conduct**

Collegiate athletes are seen in the public eye more often than the average college student. The privilege of being a college athlete is accompanied by a responsibility to represent the college with class and dignity. The image of our student-athletes and teams is very important to both the Otero Athletic Department and the College.

### **Student Athlete Classroom Expectations**

- Uphold your status as a student first and fulfill the academic requirements set forth by the NJCAA and the Otero College coaching staff and administration.
- Class attendance is expected. It is your responsibility to tell an instructor you will be gone when you must miss class for a game. You always need to communicate with instructors before missing class for games. **DO NOT EVER USE YOUR SPORT AS AN EXCUSE FOR MISSING CLASS!** If your sport is causing you to miss class, it should only be for a game and not practice or meetings. Again, tell the instructor in advance if you will miss class.
- Be on time for class and be respectful of the instructors and your classmates. Follow the rules and expectations of the class. Be a person of academic integrity. Cheating is not tolerated.
- Maintain enrollment in 12 credits per semester and maintain satisfactory academic progress. Dropping below 12 credit hours in a semester will render you ineligible for the NJCAA.

### **Athletic Conduct Expectations**

- Conduct yourself in a manner befitting Otero College and Rattler Athletics on and off the field/court.
- Cooperate fully with the coaching staff, performing any tasks set forth by the coaching staff to the best of your ability and accepting whatever role the coaching staff outlines for you.
- Abide by team policies regarding appearance, behavior, and extracurricular activities.
- Follow all team and department rules.
- Observe all protocols set forward by the Athletic Trainer
- Play the sport according to the rules. This includes conduct toward opposing players, officials, and spectators.
- Quitting or being dismissed from the team may result in the termination of your scholarship and/or having to pay it back.

### **Alcohol Policy**

By Board Policy 19-30 "Drug-Free Schools," the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of alcohol by student-athletes is prohibited. Additionally, the Code of Student Behavioral Expectations and Responsibilities prohibits the use, being under the influence,



manufacturing, possession, cultivating, distribution, purchase, or sale of alcohol and alcohol paraphernalia while on college-owned or College-controlled property, and/or at any function authorized or supervised by the College, and/or in state-owned or leased vehicles. The NJCAA also prohibits the use of alcohol by student-athletes before, during, or after contests.

Alcohol incidents occurring off-campus will be handled on a case-by-case basis and student-athletes may be subject to discipline if the incident occurs at a college-sponsored event or affects a substantial College interest.

A student who has been reported for a violation of the Athletic Code of Conduct and Alcohol Policy, the Code of Student Behavioral Expectations and Responsibilities, or the Alcohol Policy as stated in the Student Handbook will be subject to the following sanctions. The College reserves the right to skip steps depending on the facts and circumstances of each situation and the nature of the violation.

- **Violation/Incident ONE:**
  - Athletic disciplinary action is at the discretion of the head coach.
  - Consultation with the athletic director.
  - Consultation with the head coach.
  - Referral to Student Conduct.
- **Violation/Incident TWO:**
  - 2 game / 2 doubleheader suspension
  - Consultation with the athletic director.
  - Consultation with the head coach.
  - Referral to Student Conduct.
- **Violation/Incident THREE:**
  - IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL FROM THE TEAM
  - Loss of athletic scholarship
  - Referral to Student Conduct

#### **Drug Policy:**

By Board Policy 19-30 "Drug-Free Schools," the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs, including marijuana, by student-athletes is prohibited. Additionally, the Code of Student Behavioral Expectations and Responsibilities prohibits the use, being under the influence, manufacturing, possession, cultivating, distribution, purchase, or sale of illicit drugs (including marijuana) and drug paraphernalia while on college-owned or College-controlled property, and/or at any function authorized or supervised by the College, and/or in state-owned or leased vehicles. The NJCAA also prohibits the use of alcohol by student-athletes before, during, or after contests.

Possession of any illicit drug, whether alone or in a group, is a violation of this policy. Possession alone as well as use in a group setting with other people present; and there is an obvious intent to use controlled substances by people present, and by being physically present in a room where an illegal-controlled substance is visible/physically being used and distributed implicates the observer as a violator.



Drug incidents occurring off-campus will be handled on a case-by-case basis and student-athletes may be subject to discipline if the incident occurs at a college-sponsored event or affects a substantial College interest.

A student who has been reported for a violation of the Athletic Code of Conduct, the Code of Student Behavioral Expectations and Responsibilities, or the Drug Policy as stated in the Student Handbook will be subject to the following sanctions. The College reserves the right to skip steps depending on the facts and circumstances of each situation and the nature of the violation.

- Violation/Incident ONE:
  - Consultation with the athletic director.
  - Consultation with the head coach.
  - Disciplinary action is at the discretion of the head coach.
  - 2 game / 2 doubleheader suspension
  - Meeting with a counselor for further evaluation and recommendations for any drug-related education and/or professional counseling
  - Referral to Student Conduct
  
- Violation/Incident TWO:
  - IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL FROM THE TEAM
  - Loss of athletic scholarship
  - Referral to Student Conduct

### **Random Drug Testing**

Otero College promotes a drug-free campus and drug-free athletic programs. To encourage and monitor compliance with applicable drug policies, Otero College requires all student-athletes to be subject to the random drug testing program. It is the belief of the Otero College Athletics Department and the NJCAA that athletic participation is a privilege. Because participation is a privilege, those athletes who choose to use illicit drugs or alcohol may lose that privilege. The Otero College Athletics Department believes that the use of illicit drugs hurts an athlete's physical, mental, and/or emotional well-being. As such, it is in the best interest of our student-athletes to conduct random mandatory drug testing and substance abuse counseling if necessary to our student-athletes. These activities can take place at any time during the school year, whether your sport is in-season or out of season.

Any class of drug that may alter athletic performance is banned by the NJCAA, including but not limited to:

- Stimulants such as caffeine, guarana, ma huang, or cocaine.
- Anabolic agents such as androstenediol (andro) testosterone or DHEA.
- Diuretics and urine manipulators
- Street drugs such as heroin, marijuana, or methamphetamine.
- Peptide hormones such as human growth hormone (HGH), Human chorionic Gonadotrophin (HCG)
- Anti-estrogens like tamoxifen and clomiphene.



- For a complete list of banned substances go to [www.drugfreesport.com](http://www.drugfreesport.com) or [NCAA Banned Substances - NCAA.org](http://NCAA Banned Substances - NCAA.org)
- It is the purpose of Otero College's random drug testing and education program to:
  1. Educate student-athletes as to the possible consequences of illegal drug use.
  2. Prevent drug use and any negative consequences that come from drug use.
  3. Assist in providing resources for counseling to students who have specific needs.

To ensure proper administration of the program, the following procedures will be used:

- The Otero Athletics Department will give the Otero Athletic Medical Director each team's sport roster.
- The Otero Athletic Medical Director will randomly select 10% of each team's sport roster based on the NJCAA Sports Procedures allowable Letter of Intent number.
- Random testing will occur at least once per semester.
- The coaching staff will explain the drug testing policy to prospective student-athletes when recruiting.
- Student-athletes will sign a letter of intent or agreement form consenting to participation in the drug testing and education program (Student-Athlete Handbook/Code of Conduct).
- All student-athletes, student managers, or other students working with the athletics department will participate in the drug education and testing program.
- Students will be notified if they are selected for a drug test and must report for testing immediately.
- Testing will be performed under the direction of the Otero Athletic Medical Director
- Students who do not report for testing immediately after being notified of the test will be considered to have positive tests.
- The results of the tests will be reported directly to the Athletic Director and the athlete's head coach.
- If the test is negative, no further action is needed.
- If an athlete tests positive for drugs, it will be considered a policy violation and subject to sanctions.
- If the test results are inconclusive or there is an error, the athlete will be required to re-test at the student athletes expense, and a refusal to re-test will be treated as a positive result.

If an athlete's drug test is positive the following procedures will be used:

- The Athletic Director and Head coach will review the results and have a personal conference with the student-athlete.
- Once positive results are confirmed: The student-athlete will meet with a counselor for further evaluation, and recommendations can be made for any drug-related education and/or professional counseling. During this time, the student-athlete will be expected to meet all the team responsibilities including, but not limited to, practices, meetings, and workouts OR the head coach may instate a stricter



punishment. The student-athlete will also be subject to athletic and/or student-disciplinary sanctions as outlined in the Drug Policy.

### **Suspicion Based Testing**

The Athletic Department may test students on a reasonably suspicious basis. If a student is having performance problems that a coach or athletic department staff member believes may be related to alcohol or drug use, the student will be requested to submit immediately to drug or alcohol testing at the student's expense (\$300 may be added to the student's account for the cost of the test if there is a positive result. No charges will be incurred by the student if there is a negative result). Reasonable suspicion may include but is not limited to being in the presence of drugs, observable behavior or attitude changes, physical symptoms or appearance, odor, performance issues, evidence, or information from a reliable source, or being involved in an accident.

If this must be performed at an alternative site, transportation must be arranged, and the student is responsible for paying for transportation. Continuation in the Athletics Program is contingent on consent by the student for testing. Refusal to consent to testing will result in a positive drug test and will result in disciplinary action as noted for a positive drug test.

### **Definitions:**

**Authorized Lab:** A collection site or sites identified by the Otero College Athletics Department where students may present themselves to take a drug test.

**Controlled Substance:** has the meaning assigned by the Title 21 United States Code (USC) Controlled Substances Act Section 21 USC 802 and includes all substances listed on Schedule I through V as they may be revised from time to time (21 CFR 1308), such as amphetamines, natural and synthetic opiates, marijuana, cocaine, barbiturates, methadone, phencyclidine, benzodiazepines, and propoxyphene and their metabolites, methaqualone, and prescription drugs for which the student does not have a current prescription.

**Drug Test:** Providing a blood and/or urine sample to be analyzed for the presence or absence of specific controlled substances, as well as for substitution, adulteration, or dilution of the sample.

**Positive Test:** The presence in the test sample of illegal drugs and/or metabolites, or of prescription drugs and metabolites for which the student does not have a current prescription, at levels exceeding current testing guidelines. Dilute test results may be considered a positive test result.

**Drug:** Any substance (other than alcohol) that is a controlled substance as defined in this section.

**Reasonable Cause:** When the college or athletic department believes the actions, appearance, or conduct of a student-athlete is indicative of the use of alcohol or a controlled substance.

**Suspicion-Based Testing:** The student may be required to submit to a drug test if the Athletic Department has reasonable cause to believe that a student's performance problems or displayed behavior may be substance-related.



**Observable Behavior:** Unusual or erratic behavior can raise suspicions. Examples include slurred speech, unsteady movements, impaired coordination, confusion, and inappropriate emotional responses.

**Physical Symptoms:** Physical symptoms can be indicative of drug use. Dilated or constricted pupils, bloodshot eyes, excessive sweating, and tremors are some signs that may warrant testing.

**Odor:** The presence of unusual odors, such as the smell of marijuana or alcohol, on a student-athlete's breath or clothing, can be a reason for suspicion.

**Performance Issues:** A sudden decline in athletic or academic performance, including increased errors, absenteeism, tardiness, or decreased productivity, can trigger suspicion of substance abuse.

**Change in Appearance:** A noticeable change in a student-athlete's appearance, such as a decline in personal hygiene, disheveled clothing, or weight loss, may be cause for concern.

**Evidence of Drug Use:** Discovering drug paraphernalia, drugs, or evidence of drug use on campus, in campus housing, or a student-athlete's personal belongings can provide a strong reason for drug testing.

**Information from Reliable Sources:** Information from credible sources, such as students, faculty, staff, coaches, or administration, who report concerns about an individual's drug use can be a basis for reasonable suspicion testing.

**Pattern of Behavior:** Repeated instances of behavior consistent with drug use may lead to reasonable suspicion. For example, if a student-athlete exhibits observable signs of drug use on multiple occasions, it may trigger testing.

*All student-athletes are governed by local, state, and federal law in addition to college procedures as outlined in the Otero College Student Handbook and the Otero College Housing Policy. Violation of these policies and/or procedures by any student-athlete will be subject to college disciplinary action according to the Otero College Student Due Process System.*

*All disciplinary actions and subsequent enforcement are cumulative for the entire enrollment at Otero College.*

### **Athletic Trainer Expectations**

The athletic trainer is generally available from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday; however, this schedule will vary depending on the practice and competition schedule. The most important rule of utilizing the athletic trainer, the Athletic Training Room/Office, and the Coaching Offices is to be respectful of the athletic training and coaching staff members, and other athletes seeking treatment.

- Report all injuries the day they occur. This can be done by contacting the head coach and the assistant coach on your respective teams. An injury report must be signed and filed at this time.





- Injured athletes are expected to report for treatment daily, if an athlete misses treatment s/he will be expected to be at practice without limitations.
- Please ask before taking supplies from the training cabinet. This includes items such as crutches, towels, braces, tape, and pre-wrap.
- Return equipment when finished using it. If equipment is broken or not returned the athlete will be billed for the FULL replacement cost.
- Because of liability reasons, treatments are to be done with the immediate supervision of a Certified Athletic Trainer. If no athletic trainer is present, no treatments are to be done.
- A meeting with the trainer is not an excuse for missing class, being late to class, and being late to practice.
- It is expected that athletes treat others with respect while receiving treatment. This means no cussing/foul language or horseplay.

### **National Junior College Letter of Intent Information**

- Cancellation of a grant-in-aid is permitted by the NJCAA for the following reasons:
  - If the student-athlete becomes ineligible for participation in athletics because of academic and/or disciplinary reasons.
  - For misconduct (unrelated to athletic ability) found by the person or body in charge of general discipline at the institution, after following the same procedures as in other disciplinary matters, to be serious enough to warrant permanent suspension or dismissal from the athletic program.
  - If the student-athlete voluntarily withdraws from a sport before the institution's first

**\*\*Note: Cancellation** or modification to an athlete's scholarship during the period of its effectiveness is permissible for misconduct by the student-athlete due to disciplinary matters as stated in the NJCAA Handbook and Casebook.

### **Social Media Guidelines**

- Playing and competing for Otero College is a privilege, not a right. Student-athletes are held in high regard and are expected to serve as role models in the community. As leaders, we have the responsibility to portray our team, our school, and ourselves positively always.
- Otero College student-athletes should be aware that third parties including the media, faculty, future employers, NJCAA officials, and NCAA officials could easily access your profiles and view all personal information. This includes all pictures, videos, comments, and posters. Inappropriate material found by third parties affects the perception of the student-athlete, the athletic department, and the College. This can also be detrimental to a student-athletes future employment.



- If you are ever in doubt of the appropriateness of your online public material, consider whether it upholds and positively reflects your values and ethics as well as the Otero College Athletic Departments and the Colleges. Remember, always present a positive image, and do not do anything to embarrass yourself, the team, your family, and the institution. See System Policy for an additional reference:

### **Tobacco Use**

As per NJCAA regulations, tobacco use is prohibited at all practices, workouts, and events sanctioned by the NJCAA or Otero College. Use of tobacco products during these times will result in an athlete being ejected from an event and unable to participate in additional events for the remainder of the day.

### **Uniforms**

Furthermore, upon receipt of the indicated athletic uniform, I assume full responsibility for its wear and security. Should the uniform become lost, ruined, or stolen, I agree to reimburse the college for its full replacement value and authorize the college to withhold any money that might be due from me for the expense of the uniform.

### **Agreement**

I fully understand the Otero College Student Athlete Handbook/Code of Conduct and all of Otero's Behavioral Expectations Policies, Processes, and Procedures. I also agree to all terms and conditions of the Policies, Processes, and Procedures. Should I engage in any illegal activity, engage in misconduct that brings public discredit to the college, (i.e. illegal drugs, alcohol violations, illegal activities), I fully understand my athletic scholarship, living privilege in the residence hall, and opportunity to participate on an athletic team or be involved with an athletically related function, may or will be revoked in addition to the termination of the athletic scholarship. To all these conditions, I hereby certify that I have received the Otero College Student Athlete Handbook/Code of Conduct Policies and Procedures and agree to all by affixing my signature.

**Student-Athlete Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

