Compliance Area:  **DESIGNATION OF PLAYING & PRACTICE SEASON**

The playing (i.e., practice and competition) season for a particular sport is the period of time between the date of an institution’s first officially recognized practice session and the date of the institution’s last practice session or date of competition, whichever occurs later. An institution is permitted to conduct officially recognized practice and competition each academic year only during the playing season as regulated for each sport in accordance with the provisions of the legislation. The institution must conduct the same playing season for varsity and subvarsity teams in the same sport. The playing (i.e., practice and competition) season for a particular sport is the only time within which a member institution is permitted to conduct countable athletically related activities.

For all sports other than football and basketball, each member institution may divide the playing season into not more than two distinct segments.

Each member institution shall determine the playing season for each sport. Declaration of the institution’s playing season in each such sport shall be on file in writing in the department of athletics prior to the beginning of the institution’s playing season for that sport. Changes in the declaration for a particular sport are permissible and also shall be filed in writing in the office of the institution’s athletics director.

The length of playing season for each of the following sports shall be limited to a 132-day season, which may consist of two segments (each consisting of consecutive days) and which may exclude only required off days and official vacation, holiday and final-examination periods during which no practice or competition shall occur.

- Baseball
- Ice Hockey
- Softball
- Field Hockey
- Soccer
- Volleyball

The length of an institution’s playing season for each of the following sports shall be limited to a 144-day season, which may consist of two segments (each consisting of consecutive days) and which may exclude only required off days and official vacation, holiday and final-examination periods during which no practice or competition shall occur.

- Cross Country
- Gymnastics
- Tennis
- Golf
- Swimming & Diving
- Wrestling

An institution that sponsors both indoor and outdoor track and field and participates in at least the minimum number of contests with at least the minimum number of participants required to count both sports in meeting division membership requirements is limited to a 156-day season for indoor and outdoor track and field combined, which may consist of two segments (each consisting of consecutive days) and which may exclude only required off days per Bylaw 17.1.5.4 and official vacation, holiday and final-examination periods during which no practice or competition shall occur. Track and field student-athletes listed as participants for cross country must participate fully in cross country practices. If student-athletes are practicing in track and field events unrelated to the sport of cross country, such practice must be counted in the institution’s established segment in the sport of track and field.
The length of an institution's playing season in rowing shall be limited to a 156-day season, which may consist of two segments (each consisting of consecutive days) and which may exclude only required off days and official vacation, holiday and final-examination periods during which no practice or competition shall occur.

The length of an institution's playing season in basketball and football shall be limited to the period of time between the start of preseason practice and the end of the regular playing season.

**Procedure:**

The head coach (or designated representative) is responsible for declaring the official playing and practice season for his/her sport. This information is recorded on the Length of Playing and Practice Season Worksheet. Changes to the declared playing and practice season must be submitted in writing to the Office of Compliance Services prior to the date the change becomes effective.

**Forms Used for Documentation:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Form/Report</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>132-Day Declaration of Playing and Practice Season Form</td>
<td>To designate the playing and practice season for baseball, field hockey, ice hockey, soccer, softball and volleyball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>144-Day Declaration of Playing and Practice Season Form</td>
<td>To designate the playing and practice season for cross country, golf, gymnastics, swimming and diving, tennis and wrestling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>156-Day Declaration of Playing and Practice Season Form</td>
<td>To designate the playing and practice season for rowing and track and field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basketball Declaration of Playing and Practice Season Form</td>
<td>To designate the playing and practice season for basketball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football Declaration of Playing and Practice Season Form</td>
<td>To designate the playing and practice season for football</td>
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</tbody>
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