



Message to student-athletes regarding social media Fall 2011 Season

The social media sites of student-athletes of Our Lady of the Lake University (OLLU) will be monitored by the OLLU Saints Athletic Department, as required by the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA). Any posting of information, photographs, video, etc., shall not display instances of underage drinking, unlawful action, inappropriate behavior or conduct unbecoming of a Champion of Character®. If found, the student athlete will be notified and postings will be required to be deleted from the site immediately.

Facebook and Twitter accounts are society's new credit check, background check or drug test. Consequently, careless social network posts can lead to damaging and embarrassing media coverage, alumni complaints, NAIA investigations and major blows to student-athlete's, coach's and athletic director's reputations. It does not matter if you are a member of the NAIA, NCAA Division II or III or a BCS conference school. If inappropriate material is posted and discovered by the local media, it could be personally devastating for the student-athlete and his or her family. Further, it will be an unnecessary and unpleasant distraction for our University, your coach, athletic director and your teammates.

There have been instances at other colleges that have resulted in players being kicked off teams. These instances have included a student-athlete who posted a racial slur on Facebook, photos of two underage college players with large sums of money and liquor posted on Facebook, and postings on Twitter from student-athletes who criticized referees and incited riots against opponents.

We ask you to be very cautious and refrain from posting references to drugs, alcohol, sex, violence, racial slurs or profanity. As athletes, you are considered leaders on campus, so you must learn to act like leaders among your peers and assume the leadership responsibilities in fulfilling the obligations of life. Put your team ahead of yourself in every decision—when you're making decisions about what to eat, what to do on a Saturday night, what photos of your party to post, how deep to dig at practice, you always are affecting your team. You will never go wrong if, in every decision, you ask yourself: what would be best for my team, my teammates and my family?

We certainly respect the social networking rights of our student-athletes but, at the same time, we also want you to be mindful of how you present and represent yourselves and your family. It is necessary for us to protect our brand, image and reputation. This is not a disciplinary issue. It is really meant to protect the reputation and the image of our school and you. Moreover, it is about education and responsible social networking.

If you have any questions, please confer with your coach or any athletic department staff member.