



**COLLEGIATE STRENGTH & CONDITIONING COACHES ASSOCIATION**

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July 28, 2015

Dear CSCCa Member,

I hope you are finding time to enjoy the summer! Time is passing quickly, and the fall semester will be here before we know it. I just wanted to provide you with an update regarding the NCAA legislation requiring all Division I Strength & Conditioning Coaches to be certified by an accredited certification program by August 1, 2015. Below is an Educational Column from the NCAA regarding Proposal No. 2013-18, as well as a response we received from the NCAA regarding clarification of this information. From the NCAA's response, it appears that the certification must be "nationally accredited." It is, however, up to the institution to determine which "nationally accredited" certifications they are willing to accept.

It is obvious that we still have much to do to continue educating athletic administrators about the value of the SCCC certification program since each institution has the ability to determine which "accredited" certifications to accept. The NCAA has backed off of its initial plan to only recognize the SCCC and CSCS certifications as fulfilling this requirement because of legal considerations. We have had a great deal of correspondence with the NCAA regarding this situation and how we can work together going forward to best protect the health, safety, and welfare of the student athlete and protect the strength and conditioning coaching profession. This is a very disappointing and troubling turn of events as it hurts the respect and credibility of the profession and places the student athlete at risk. Expect to hear more about this in the coming months. If you have any questions or concerns, please be sure and let me know. I welcome your thoughts and recommendations.

Thanks,

Dr. Chuck Stiggins  
CSCCa Executive Director

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**Subject: Fwd: Strength and Conditioning Certifications**

Educational Column

Proposal No. 2013-18 Athletics Personnel -- Conduct of Athletics Personnel -- Strength and Conditioning Coaches -- Nationally Recognized Certification (I)

Date Published: July 31, 2014

Item Ref: 2

Educational Column:

***Editor's Note: Question No. 5 of this educational column was updated March 27, 2015 and May 8, 2015 to provide additional clarification in order to avoid membership confusion. Question Nos. 4 and 5 were updated on July 16, 2015, based on guidance from the Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports. The original posting date was kept for ease of reference and to maintain a date link with other Q&A transitioned educational columns for proposals adopted at the same time.***

This document contains questions and answers to assist the NCAA membership in its understanding of Proposal No. 2013-18 (nationally recognized certification of strength and conditioning coaches).

**Question No. 1:** Is a sport coach (e.g., head or assistant basketball coach) required to maintain strength and conditioning coach certification?

**Answer:** No.

**Question No. 2:** May an institution pay for the nationally accredited certification program?

**Answer:** Yes.

**Question No. 3:** Must outside fitness instructors (e.g., yoga, Pilates, zumba, crossfit, etc.) receive strength and conditioning coach certification in order to conduct their fitness programs with student-athletes?

**Answer:** No.

**Question No. 4:** What should an institution consider when evaluating strength and conditioning certifications?

**Answer:** It is the responsibility of the institution to determine what nationally accredited strength and conditioning certification programs best meet institutional needs. The following is guidance that institutions may use when evaluating strength and conditioning certifications:

- a. Consider whether completion of the certification program results in the provision of a strength and conditioning credential that is accredited. Accreditation of the certification exam and/or credential is different from accreditation of the educational component of a strength and conditioning program;
- b. Consider the minimal professional educational standards and continuing education requirements required by the certification program;
- c. Consider whether the certification also requires current CPR and AED certification; and
- d. Consider whether the certification requires a baccalaureate degree or higher.

**Question No. 5:** Should outside fitness instructors (e.g., yoga, Pilates, zumba, crossfit, etc.) receive strength and conditioning coach certification in order to conduct strength and conditioning activities with student-athletes?

**Answer:** While the legislation does not require outside fitness instructors to have strength and conditioning coach certification, institutions should evaluate whether strength and conditioning certification is appropriate for any individual who conducts strength and conditioning activities for student-athletes, including, but not limited to, outside fitness instructors.

Finally, institutions should note that a strength and conditioning coach who conducts voluntary weight-training or conditioning activities with prospective student-athletes or enrolled student-athletes is required to maintain certification in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

**Notice about Educational Columns:** Educational columns and hot topics are intended to assist the membership with the correct application of legislation and/or interpretations by providing clarifications, reminders and examples. They are based on legislation and official and staff interpretations applicable at the time of publication. Therefore, educational columns and hot topics are binding to the extent that the legislation and interpretations on which they are based remain applicable. Educational columns are posted on a regular basis to address a variety of issues and hot topics are posted as necessary in order to address timely issues.

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Response received from the NCAA:

*The only mandated requirement is an **accredited certification program**. In addition to that requirement, the educational column establishes “recommendations” that we hope will be used as guides by the institutions when determining which accredited credentials they wish to require in their strength and conditioning staff. Previous education columns did position those factors as requirements, but that was not a defensible position for us because existing legislation did not impose those same factors.*

*So for example, an institution may be interested in hiring staff with a particular credential. The first test would be to ensure the certification comes from an accredited certification program. But beyond that, the school has discretion. If, for example, a school chose to employ as a strength and conditioning professional someone with an NASM Personal Training Certificate – which is an NCCA accredited certification – they would be free to do so, though our educational guidance encourages them to consider the competencies underlying the certification. In this example, we hope that guidance leads to considerations of the difference between “strength & conditioning” competency and “personal training” competency, but the institution has the discretion to decide for itself.*