

**Rutgers Swimming and Diving 2019-2020**  
Standards, Expectations, and Non-Negotiables

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## **Introduction**

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a clear understanding of the great program and people you represent as a lifelong member of the Rutgers Swimming and Diving family. The handbook outlines the values on which the Rutgers Swimming and Diving program is driven, determining the direction and potential of the team as a whole. Our intention is that you refer to this handbook to guide your decisions and behavior throughout the entirety of the season and not simply put it down after we go through it as a team the first week of practice.

Living this book out will lead you to embrace the team values and make intentional decisions in your life and to put these values before yourself. There will be times when making the best decision will be difficult and no one person on this team is destined to make every correct decision. Conflicts will arise with your teammates, coaches, staff and professors; be quick to listen, seek understanding, and communicate more than you feel necessary.

Included in this book are additional references to guide you through the Rutgers Swimming and Diving program. Within our value-driven culture, we have incorporated non-negotiables to protect the integrity of our program as well as the safety of all student-athletes, coaches, PSAs and staff. Please see the table of contents for the contents of this handbook which describes your responsibility as a member of the Swimming and Diving team.

### **Team Mission**

Rutgers Swimming and Diving is committed to cultivating an environment of excellence where each team member is valued and challenged to grow as leaders in competition and in the community. Rutgers Swimmers and Divers choose a lifelong commitment to lead and serve others toward excellence and achievement.

### **Team Vision**

A Rutgers Swimmer and Diver will be recognized as a leader, distinguished by academic and athletic achievement. Leveraging the diversity from within the team, they will develop mental and physical strength that makes an impact locally and extends globally. Rutgers Swimmers and Divers will be purposeful, progressive, and relentless in their pursuit of excellence. RU on board?

## Values

### **Excellence**

In order to get the most out of your Rutgers Swimming and Diving experience you must choose to make excellence a habit. Rutgers athletes and coaches understand that excellent outcomes are the result of excellent preparation, excellent dedication, and excellent uncompromising attention to detail.

### **Service**

As a Rutgers Swimming and Diving athlete, you have the opportunity and responsibility to lead and inspire others. Look for opportunities for service to leave a lasting impact for your teammates and the community.

### **Intentional action**

Individual and team goals are reached through a series of deliberate actions and decisions. As Rutgers Swimming and Diving team members, we understand that the series of decisions we make throughout the course of our season culminate into our truth. Hope is not a strategy.

### **Character**

Character is comprised of various values such as loyalty, dedication, honesty, and selflessness weaved together to form the individual; those individuals weave together to form a group. Throughout the course of your individual careers and collective careers, we will develop into a team of supreme character.

### **Relentlessness**

As a team, we embrace competitive challenges with enthusiasm and excitement. We carry ourselves with an attitude of humble confidence. We are making a conscious decision to forge toward our goals despite any obstacles in our way. We will go over, under, around, or through any barriers we encounter.

### **Communication**

As members of the Rutgers Swimming and Diving team, we pride ourselves on seeking understanding before any actions are taken or judgments are made when communicating with our peers, coaches, and staff. As an effective communicator, seeking understanding will help you find common ground to confront the root of the breakdown and not treat the symptoms.

### **The Ideal Rutgers Swimmer and Diver**

1. Wakes up every morning with a clear understanding of our team's mission and vision.
2. Goes to every class, training session, and competition with a sense of urgency to demonstrate our team's values.
3. Has a healthy self-image, engages in positive-self talk, feels good about the person they are and actively works toward becoming the person they wish to be.
4. Is proud of who they are and what they represent: themselves, their team, their university, their families, their friends, and their communities. They recognize the inherent enjoyment of the college experience is incumbent on themselves and are excited to pursue excellence in every aspect of their lives.
5. Welcomes the spirit of competition.
6. Embraces the responsibility to support their team in the same manner they would support their family.
7. Demonstrates grit through their relentless pursuit of excellence.
8. Seeks emotional, athletic, and academic balance in their daily life.
9. Strives to effectively communicate, seek understanding, and find common ground.
10. Is not afraid to engage in respectful confrontation to resolve an issue and work together to find a solution.
11. Recognizes when she needs help and is willing to ask for it.

## Team Standards

### **Academics**

- We value being students at one of the best academic institutions in the world and in the Big Ten Conference.
- Academics are our number one priority. Athletics follows closely behind. Nothing other than family and personal health should rise above these two needs when making decisions.
- We follow the Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy and refuse to plagiarize, cheat, or jeopardize our academic integrity.
- You may not attend practice or lift/conditioning instead of attending class. This is an NCAA violation.

### **Training**

Athletes must prepare the mind and body for daily training. This includes:

- Getting adequate sleep
- Eating a nutrient dense diet
- Activating the body prior to all training sessions
- Staying hydrated throughout the day and training session
- Proactively seeking pre-hab and proper nutrition to avoid injuries and any missed training sessions. We want to pre-habilitate instead of rehabilitate.
- Being proactive academically

When athletes train hard and neglect sleep, recovery, and nutrition, it is like going to class and never studying in between class sessions. When students don't study, rarely do they get anything other than average results. Additionally, if you try to cram in your "studying" only during finals or taper, rarely is the material absorbed and rarely do you have a quality result.

Many times, "studying" isn't always the easy choice. It takes extra planning, time, and attention. It requires you to prioritize performance rather than instant gratification. It requires fortitude to do what is best for YOU and your team rather than anyone else. It requires diligence and discipline.

"Control the controllable"

- Every single day we can decide to control our attitude and effort. As a team, we will choose a positive attitude and train with intentionality and intensity.
- We will be aware of the messages we are sending our coaches, teammates, and the general public with our body language. We will be a team that consistently demonstrates positive self-confidence necessary to perform at a high level. We EMBRACE competing at the highest level. We create a competitive environment in training every single day to raise the level of performance within our own team.
- We understand that we control our thoughts and therefore our self-image. We do not allow outsiders or circumstances to have an effect on how we treat or think about ourselves.

### **Competition**

- Anyone, anywhere, anytime.

## **Recruiting**

- Recruiting is the lifeblood of our program and we will treat it as such. It is an opportunity to contribute to championships and excellence, without ever having to score a point.
- Athletes take visits because of coaches--they commit because of the team. YOU are our most powerful recruiters.
- Recruits on campus will always be treated as a priority. They are our guests and we want to make them feel at home. We always call our recruits by name.
- Recruiting weekends are a priority of the whole team—not just those that are hosting that weekend.
- Block out recruiting weekends on your schedule now. Plan ahead academically in order to be available for team events on these weekends.
- Recruits will NEVER be in the presence of alcohol or drugs or alone at any time.
- No one on the team will consume alcohol on recruiting weekends. It does not matter if you're not in the presence of the recruit or of legal drinking age. No alcohol will be consumed by anyone.
- Recruiting is a time to showcase who we are and what we believe. We should take pride in having this opportunity. Only speak to your experience at Rutgers rather than speaking negatively about any other team or academic institution.
- We recruit better than before so we can be better than we've ever been. We invite competitors onto our team.

## **Your decisions reflect your legacy**

- All the decisions we make outside of the pool reflect our desire to rise to the top of the Big Ten and have the highest team GPA in the nation.
- All decisions adhere to University policies, and State and Federal laws.
- Our decisions reflect the importance of Rutgers Swimming and Diving, our academic pursuits, and our mental and physical health on a daily basis.
- Our decisions reflect the Standards and Expectations set forth by the Athletic Department. You are responsible for reading and understanding the topics and material covered in the Rutgers Student-Athlete Standards and Expectations. The Standards and Expectations document outlines what is expected of you as a student-athlete in many areas including:
  - Sportsmanship and Conduct
  - Academic Support Services for Student Athletes
  - NCAA and Big Ten Conference Compliance
  - Sports Medicine
  - The Alcohol and Drug Education and Testing Policy
  - Athletic Communications and Media Relations
  - Athletic Equipment Issue and Return
  - Housing
  - Parking
  - Social Media, Social Networking and Other Forms of Communication

A violation of any rule, regulation, law or policy described in the Standards and Expectations is considered a violation of abiding by the team handbook and will be treated as such.

### **Interacting with those around us**

- Coaches, team members, support staff and administrators are committed to treating everyone with respect, kindness, and appreciation.
- We are a team that values gratitude. We acknowledge those that help to provide us with the experience and opportunity we have as members of Rutgers Swimming and Diving. This includes but is not limited to:
  - Custodians, lifeguards, pool staff, support staff, competitors, timers, officials, fans, parents, donors/boosters, military, law enforcement, flight attendants, pilots, bus drivers, hotel staff, restaurant staff, etc.
  - Each of these people plays an integral role in your opportunity to pursue excellence.
  - We carry ourselves with class and distinction.

### **Compliance**

- Act responsibly and make the right choices when confronted with any situation where you risk violating any relevant local, state or federal law, or any rule, policy, or procedure of the NCAA, and the Big Ten, the University and this team handbook.
- As a student-athlete and a member of this team, you agree to:
  - comply with each one of the team standards, expectations, and non-negotiables outlined in this document;
  - follow all NCAA and Big Ten regulations as well as team rules, university policies, local, state, and federal laws;
  - report any and all NCAA and Big Ten violations or potential issues to the coaching staff or the Office of Athletic Compliance;
  - report any event or activity that places you in violation of anything outlined in the team handbook, university policies, or local, state, or federal law, to the head coach or your Sports Administrator in person, by email, text message, or phone as soon as possible after the event occurs.
  - participate in rules education when required to do so; and
  - use the DIA Office of Athletic Compliance as a resource to make sure that your eligibility is protected and that you are knowledgeable of compliance-related matters.

### **Behavior and Communication with Support Staff**

- Be on time and prepared for any academic appointment with tutors, mentors, or academic advisors.
- Be on time for any appointment made with our team's athletic trainer and any other member of the Sports Medicine staff. You must notify the team's athletic trainer or other Sports Medicine staff member in advance of any anticipated lateness or absence from a scheduled appointment.
- Respond to all requests for communication from coaches, administrators, or support staff via phone, email, etc. within 24 hours unless the inquiry requires immediate response.

**Training Room/Sports Medicine**

- You must report all injuries and illnesses to our team's athletic trainer immediately. Even if you think the injury is not significant, it could develop into a significant injury or illness. Be proactive when maintaining your health rather than reactive.
- The training room is a place to get treatment or rehab. It is not a place to hang out.
- Follow all posted training room policies and procedures when in the training room.

## Team Expectations

- We expect to compete at the highest level.
- We expect to improve our competitiveness at Big Tens each season.
- We expect to represent our countries in international competition.
- We expect to have the highest team GPA in the nation.
- We expect our teammates, coaches, administrators and support staff to make decisions that reflect our values and move this team toward the fulfillment of our goals.
- We expect our teammates and coaches to be prepared for every single training session and every single competition.
- We expect all athletes to be intentional with recovery between training sessions; the coaches are training all athletes with the understanding that you are doing everything in your power to recover properly in between every training session.
- We expect to bring our teammates back in when they are straying from our team's mission and vision.
- We expect the coaches and athletes to create an environment where everyone feels welcome and wants to contribute to improving.
- We expect each team member to improve in the pool and on the boards while having a tremendous student-athlete experience.
- We expect to create a culture that everyone wants to be a part of but few get the opportunity.
- We expect our administrators, coaches, athletes, and support staff to represent Rutgers Swimming and Diving with pride and distinction in and outside of the pool and work environment.
- We expect to be leaders in our conference, on our campus, in our athletic department, and in our community.
- We expect to leave Rutgers as powerful leaders prepared to tackle any desired pursuit.
- We expect to deal with success humbly and move on from failure swiftly upon reflection.
- We expect you to recruit a class better than yours.
- We expect you to demonstrate gratitude for all that Rutgers has to offer.

## **Team Protocols and Procedures: Taking Ownership of the Process**

What if I am sick or injured?

- Call a coach (do not text, email, message, etc.). If the coach does not answer, follow up with a text message directly after calling.
- Go see the athletic trainer at your first available opportunity.
- Our expectation is that the medical staff will have a return to training plan within 24 hours of the initial injury/illness.
- The athletic trainer will follow up with your coach and YOU need to follow up with the coach following any diagnosis or need to see a doctor, miss a training session, etc. within an hour of the appointment.
- If you must miss a weights session, academic appointment, or meeting you need to reach out to the respective parties to communicate beforehand. (Kevin, Gilah, etc.).
- Communicate so we are all on the same page and can help you return to full health.
- Athletes that are not following the treatment plan to return to full health will lose their privilege to train and compete.

What if I am going to be late to a practice because of class running over time, a meeting running over, etc.

- Instances such as these should never be a trend. These should be isolated and uncontrollable instances.
- Any anticipated lateness or absence from practice must be communicated to the head coach at your first opportunity.
- Seek the approval of the head coach to reschedule any training session.

What if I make a mistake?

- The Rutgers Swimming and Diving team is a safe place to make mistakes.
- This team is built on love and respect.
- Don't compound a problem by hiding it or trying to cover it up. Be honest and transparent. This always leads to the best outcome for everyone involved.

What do I do when I miss class for team travel?

- On the first day of the semester, go up to each of your professors, look your professor in the eye, shake their hand and introduce yourself. Then provide an outline of each of our competitions and the days you will be missing for team travel. You will be provided a "travel letter" from academic support each semester for all classes to be missed due to team travel. You will provide this letter to your professors once it is issued to you.
- Be proactive. Email your professor a week out from each travel day and remind the professor of your upcoming absence. If you are going to miss a quiz, test, due date for something, etc. make sure you reach out even earlier and abide by the professor's protocol for how to proceed. Never ask questions such as, "will I miss anything?" Instead say something to the effect of, "I have already arranged to get notes from one of my peers and will read the assigned section in the book. Do you have any further suggestions for how I can absorb the material from class when I am absent for my team competition?"

- Travel cannot be used as an excuse for not attending class if you are not traveling with the team.

What if I need to miss class for something other than team travel?

- Alert Gilah Rosenberg (when reasonably possible yourself) or via the coaching staff when there are emergencies that will cause you to miss class.
- Notification should be done prior to missing class. Illness (seen by doctor), injury (concussion seen by trainer/doctor) and family emergencies are the reasons that will not result in academic warnings.

What do I wear to training sessions?

- Wear team issued, adidas gear to all training sessions including water and weights.
- Only wear Rutgers caps during water training sessions.

What if I have a problem with my gear or equipment?

- If there is ever an issue with your gear, reach out to Brea directly to change sizes, report any equipment malfunctions, etc.

How do I have my weights clothes washed?

- All laundry loops will be dropped off at the RAC
  - There will be a designated Swimming and Diving basket located in the hallway off the basement level
  - Every time you would like your laundry done, drop it in the basket in the hall
  - The laundry will be ready the next day and will be hanging on the side of the basket

What is our travel schedule?

- All travel information including the itinerary and rooming list will be posted to Teamworks.
- Make sure you check Teamworks on a regular basis and refer to it during team travel so you know where to be and when

How do I contribute to recruiting weekends?

- First, be aware of the guests that are coming on an official visit.
  - Read their info graphics posted on Teamworks
- Introduce yourself when you see them on campus or on the pool deck
- Look for opportunities to bring them into conversation rather than only conversing with your teammates. We want to keep them engaged.
- Be aware of the schedule by checking the recruiting itinerary on Teamworks before the visit begins
- After checking the itinerary, look for opportunities to be involved to provide our guests with the best official visit experience.
- Be flexible.

- Recruiting weekends can become hectic. Flights get cancelled, meetings get moved, PSAs have food allergies or preferences. Be flexible and know that sometimes things will change and we will give you as much notice as possible.

Where will we communicate general announcements to the team?

- Teamworks will be the primary means of team communication.
  - There will be a team group message thread as well as sport (swimming vs diving) specific threads.
  - All travel and practice information will be posted in Teamworks; we will be updating information frequently to ensure that it is correct.
  - Please check the app frequently and turn on your notifications so that you are getting all the up to date information.

What do I wear and bring to competitions?

- Refer to the information distributed by the meet day knights prior to competition day for necessary clothing and equipment.
- Be proactive in finding and bringing the necessary resources for you to be successful. Travel with a water bottle, snacks, recovery equipment, etc. Take an active role in eliminating all variables that will adversely impact the pursuit of excellence.
- Each person can check one bag when we travel as a team. However, never pack any swimming gear needed for competition in your checked bag (tech suit, cap, goggles, etc.)
- If we are traveling via plane, make sure you have your ID and/or passport.
- At all meets, we are engaged in the present moment. We are invested in our own success and the success of others. When a teammate succeeds—we all succeed. In order to establish a cohesive deck environment, we will never have cell phones or other distractions present on the pool deck.
- When we travel via bus, you will leave you cell phones at the front of the bus with the coaching staff. Use this time to engage with your teammates. If you need to call or text someone because of a certain circumstance, please speak to one of the coaches.

What if my parents travel to our invite or Big Tens? Can I go spend time with them in between sessions?

- Before leaving the group, make sure you have spoken with a coach. These decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis with our team's mission and vision and your performance at the forefront.

What if the decisions being made by my teammates do not reflect the mission and vision of our team?

- If you are holding someone accountable and it's not coming from a place of love, you're just rubbing their nose in it and are not truly embracing what we're trying to accomplish. We expect that you hold each other accountable to all team standards and expectations from a place of love.
- Always bring concerns directly to the person you are concerned about. Do not engage in speaking about a teammate with others.
- The first step to holding each other accountable is to seek understanding.

- If you do not know how to approach a teammate, speak with a coach to assist and direct you. If a coach is involved in any team conflict, names will never be left private except under the most extreme circumstances. Keep in mind, there are certain things that we are legally not allowed to keep confidential if reported to us.

How do I earn a Varsity Letter?

- The following requirements must be met to qualify for a varsity letter:
  - A varsity letter recipient is a swimmer or diver who has been in good standing with the program during the 2019-2020 academic year and has been eligible for practice and competition.

## Non-Negotiables

### **Safety**

- The safety of yourself and others will be held in the highest regard. Any decision or activity that endangers yourself or another person will result in swift disciplinary action.

### **Study Hall**

· Freshmen / Transfer Student-athletes	8 hours/week
· Student-athletes, Cumulative GPA 2.49 or below	8 hours/week
· Student-athletes on probation for semester	8 hours/week
· Student-athletes, Cumulative GPA Between 2.50 and 2.74	6 hours/week
· Student-athletes, Cumulative GPA Between 2.75 and 2.99	4 hours/week

- Student hall hours must be completed by noon on Friday.

### **Legal matters**

- Any violation by athletes that constitute a violation of local, state, or federal law will be grounds for immediate suspension or expulsion from the team and/or university. Should any athlete be arrested or charged with a crime of any type, the coaches should be notified by you immediately.
- Academic Integrity
  - All team members will abide by the academic integrity policy as stated on the Rutgers website. By respecting this policy, you are respecting University law and the value of your education.
- The Sonny Werblin Center
  - We share the gift of the Sonny Werblin Center with the students, staff, and faculty at Rutgers. We expect you to be an ambassador to all visitors to the center at all times and be aware of keeping the facility as one of the premier aquatic centers in the northeast.

### **Hazing**

- Hazing of any type is prohibited. Please refer to the Standards and Expectations for student-athletes for further information about hazing, including university policy, state law, and examples of activities constituting hazing.

### **Hosting PSAs**

- Anyone that takes part in or is aware of taking a PSA to a party where drugs or alcohol is present will be grounds for immediate dismissal from the team.
- All members of the team are expected to participate in hosting a PSA. No alcohol or mind-altering substances will be consumed by anyone on the team when a PSA is on campus. You are expected to host as a group in a healthy, organized, and collective manner while providing a safe environment for all visitors to this campus.

### **Honesty**

- We expect you to be honest with all coaches, teammates, support staff., and compliance. Anyone that is found to be dishonest will be subject to swift disciplinary action.

## Consequences

### **Consequences for Violating the Team Handbook**

Any violations of Conference rules, NCAA rules, University rules, Student-Athlete Standards and Expectations, and/or Team Standards, Expectations, and Non-Negotiables may result in immediate disciplinary action ranging from an apology to the team, an apology to the administration, suspension from practice(s), suspension from competition(s), community service, reduction or cancellation of scholarship, or suspension or dismissal from the team, subject to the severity of the violation, the discretion of the head coach, and review by administration, as may be required.

### **Unusual Circumstances**

Recognizing that each situation presents a unique set of circumstances, deviation from what is listed in this team handbook may be warranted. Should such an occasion arise, the Head Coach, in consultation with the administration, will have the discretion to deviate from this handbook. In all such circumstances, the Head Coach and/or administrator will document in writing the reasons for such deviation.

## Athletic Department Resources and Contact Information

Jon Maccoll (Head Swimming Coach)

[jmaccoll@scarletknights.com](mailto:jmaccoll@scarletknights.com)

248-930-0481

Fred Woodruff (Head Diving Coach)

[fwoodruff@scarletknights.com](mailto:fwoodruff@scarletknights.com)

848-702-0752

Kelsie Saxe (Assistant Swimming Coach)

[ksaxe@scarletknights.com](mailto:ksaxe@scarletknights.com)

865-235-7311

Brea Richardson (Coordinator of Swimming and Diving Operations)

[brichardson@scarletknights.com](mailto:brichardson@scarletknights.com)

336-541-0110

Vera Koprivova (Volunteer Assistant Coach)

732-484-1563

Kate Hickey (Senior Associate Athletic Director)

[khickey@scarletknights.com](mailto:khickey@scarletknights.com)

732-445-7899

Tom Crehan (Team manager)

[thomascreehan@gmail.com](mailto:thomascreehan@gmail.com)

848-466-7583

Gilah Rosenberg (Academic Advisor)

[gilah.rosenberg@Rutgers.edu](mailto:gilah.rosenberg@Rutgers.edu)

732-925-1668

Kevin Backus (Strength and Conditioning Coach)

[kbackus@scarletknights.com](mailto:kbackus@scarletknights.com)

215-932-9285

Randi Small (Athletic Trainer)

[rsmall@scarletknights.com](mailto:rsmall@scarletknights.com)

732-445-8842

Scott Walker (Executive Director-Academic Support)

[swalker@scarletknights.com](mailto:swalker@scarletknights.com)

732-445-6159

Katie Salomone (Assistant Director of Sports Nutrition)

[ksalomone@scarletknights.com](mailto:ksalomone@scarletknights.com)

BJ Merriam

Director of Compliance

[bmerriam@scarletknights.com](mailto:bmerriam@scarletknights.com)

732-445-7845

Kristina Navarro (Senior Associate Athletic Director for Leadership Development and Strategic Partnerships)

[knavarro@scarletknights.com](mailto:knavarro@scarletknights.com)

Dan Chung (Director for CAPS/Team sports psychologist)

[dr.dan@rutgers.edu](mailto:dr.dan@rutgers.edu)

[dchung@scarletknights.com](mailto:dchung@scarletknights.com)

732-445-8109

Matt Choquette (Assistant Director of Athletic Communications)

[mchoquette@scarletknights.com](mailto:mchoquette@scarletknights.com)

732-445-8119

## **University Resources and Contact Information**

Rutgers University Counseling Center

848-932-7884

17 senior street

College Avenue Campus

Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance

848-932-1181

3 Bartlett Street

College Avenue Campus

Rutgers University Police Department (RUPD)

848-932-7211 (non-emergency)

911 (emergency)

Public Safety

55 Commercial Avenue

Douglass Campus

International students and scholars

848-932-1777

180 College Ave

College Avenue Campus