



*INTERNATIONAL SPORTS PROFESSIONALS ASSOCIATION™*

# **The International Sports Professionals Association**

## **Academic Accreditation Guidelines**

## Academic Accreditation Guidelines

The purpose of this document is to define the academic requirements and guidelines for accreditation by the International Sports Professionals Association - ISPA™. This document is intended to guide the administration of the institution of interest through the process of accreditation in detail. It also serves to guide the institution of interest through further refinement or the design and implementation of degrees proposed for accreditation.

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## Introduction

Sports, and their related professional industries, are ever changing and offer a multitude of diverse career opportunities from specialist to generalist. The demand for qualified and competent professionals is and has been increasing for more than thirty years. This industry is seemingly independent of economic fluctuation and provides a great deal of job opportunities, outlook and creation globally. Sports Professionals make a significant contribution to the sustainable development of youth, sport infrastructure, generation of wealth across many economic sectors and quality of life worldwide. With Accredited Professionals, Organizations and Academic Institutions across the world, the International Sports Professionals Association has the resources and expertise to support the professional development of Sports Professionals from the early stages of their education and on throughout their careers.

The International Sports Professionals Association's Mission and Principles of Practice:

Mission:

The International Sports Professionals Association - ISPA™ believes that sports transcend mere games and are a vehicle for enriching life. As such, those professionals committed to serving sports take on a great responsibility. It is ISPA's mission to ensure that professionals serving sports are qualified to accept this responsibility and as a result raise the standard of service that athletes receive.

Principles of Practice:

1. Sports should be a means of learning about life in general and be an integrated part of a healthy lifestyle for all.
2. The development of character and the enhancement of lifestyle is a major goal of sporting activities.
3. Athletes should be encouraged always give to their best ability, but to do so for the joy of competition, win or lose.
4. Honor and integrity are more important than winning.
5. Sportsmanship entails attitudes, which keep athletic endeavors in proper perspective.
6. Sportsmanship enhances overall mental and physical health and social development.
7. Honoring your opponent makes your victory greater. Win or lose, your participation in sports is a personal victory.

8. Using performance-enhancing drugs, or other unsanctioned advantages in competition or in recreation is unacceptable and dangerous to the individual and to society.
9. Athletes should be encouraged and advised to participate in sports within the limits of their best ability. Professionals should intervene with athletes to help them understand the limits to which they can aspire.
10. It is never necessary to demean, diminish, or otherwise emotionally abuse an athlete. ISPA does not accept negative motivational techniques. Aggression toward athletes is unacceptable.
11. It is never necessary to abuse an athlete physically. ISPA defines abuse broadly to include demanding the athlete(s) to put their body or their being at risk for harm.

The International Sports Professionals Association is pledged to build a system of care for athletes of all ages through establishing standards of practice, training and education for professionals, coaches, parents, fans and athletes.

## Benefits of ISPA Academic Accreditation

ISPA Academic Accreditation yields many critical advantages and opportunities to the institution of interest and its current and prospective future students. These benefits include but are not limited to:

- Adding credibility and enhancing new or existing sports or sports-related academic degree programs and curriculum
- Creating a sustainable competitive advantage for the institution of interest through becoming more desirable to potential future students and assuring academic viability, versatility and competency
- Receiving more favorable academic reviews for the institution of interest in general and the proposed program(s) to be accredited
- Extensive and exhaustive review, aide and guidance in the development of new and existing programs and curriculum from the ISPA to meet accreditation standards.
- ISPA Student Accreditation for all qualified and eligible students enrolled in ISPA Accredited programs. ISPA Student Accreditation includes many valuable professional benefits, such as: a Résumé Building Tip Guide; a letter of introduction/recommendation from ISPA president, Dr. John E. Mayer (upon request); access to the “Careers In Sports” three- course continuing education series; a frame-quality certificate for display; and the opportunity to submit articles or academic research publication and circulation in the semi-annually published *International Journal of Sports and Ethics*. ISPA Student Accreditation is a valuable credential that gives your students a distinct advantage over other young professionals in your area. Students will have credentials that will make them attractive job candidates both immediately and after finishing your institution’s program of study and on into their professional careers.
- Full service publishing and promotion of professional materials such as sports-related academic works, articles, research and more through the ISPA and the prestigious Author House® Publishing. Your students and faculty will be afforded the opportunity to greatly benefit from getting their professional works efficiently published.
- Strategic marketing and advertising assistance from the ISPA in promoting the institution of interest and its practices throughout the global academic community.

## **Examples of Degrees That the ISPA Will Consider for Accreditation**

This list includes those programs/degrees that the ISPA currently accredits. There may be many other programs/degrees that have not been included here that the ISPA may consider for accreditation. Institutions of interest may inquire as to whether or not other programs/degrees are eligible for ISPA Academic Accreditation by contacting the ISPA via the contact information provided within this document.

Athletic Physical Rehabilitation/Therapy  
Athlete Representation – Sports Agent  
Coaching  
Exercise Science  
Health Sciences (generally specialized)  
Kinesthesiology  
Physical Education  
Sport and Physical Activity  
Sports and Fitness Management  
Sports Broadcasting  
Sports Communication  
Sports Counseling  
Sports Engineering  
Sports Exercise Science  
Sports Fitness  
Sports Journalism  
Sports Law  
Sports Management (sport-specific and general)  
Sports Marketing  
Sports Medicine  
Sports Nutrition  
Sports Organization  
Sports Psychology  
Sports Science

## Academic Accreditation Guidelines

Accredited professional degrees are the ideal route to completion of the educational base for individuals aiming to enter sports and sports-related industries. Accredited academic programs should provide a platform for aspiring, motivated students with the potential to build successful careers demanding understanding of core principles, technical skills, ethical practices, proficiency at a high level and the motivation to continue lifelong learning. Consequently, the International Sports Professionals Association - ISPA™ accredits a wide range of professional degree programs designed to support and develop Sports Professionals for a broad range of career paths within sports and sports-related industries.

In order to be qualified for accreditation, the proposed degrees and incorporated coursework should prepare graduates for the professions in which they look to enter by developing strong technical, clinical and ethical skills and values. Upon graduation, students should have received a broad education that encompasses the professional concepts relative to the degree obtained, and developed the versatility and depth of understanding required to solve and or relate to the problems and situations encountered in one or more branches of the relative field of choice.

All accredited degrees and professional programs should produce graduates who are:

- Motivated to practice in their respective field(s)
- Enthusiastic, knowledgeable, professional and open minded
- Recognized internationally as highly competent Sports Professionals
- Aware of the financial, ethical, legal, cultural, economic and environmental constraints under which they practice
- Aware of all current and relevant management practices
- Committed to and prepared for learning and lifelong professional development

All accredited degrees should:

- Establish the relevance of the profession of study to real world problems
- Ensure that program and coursework content matches the needs of today's modern industries and society at large
- Develop a well-rounded understanding of the principles of reliability, professional maintenance, service quality, value, marketing and safety
- Incorporate financial, ethical, legal, cultural, economic and environmental issues and sustainability throughout the program and relative coursework
- Develop an understanding of relationships with colleagues, customers, clients, supervision of staff and the ability to adapt to changing environments
- Encourage the understanding of and reflection on learning experiences
- Focus on learning outcomes, or output standards.

It is expected that the guidelines listed above will be incorporated into accredited degree coursework. Depth and breadth of coverage of these items, however, will depend on the degree's specific emphasis. The ISPA will work with the institution of interest to assure these objectives are met and up to standard.

## Academic Accreditation Requirements

In order to receive ISPA Academic Accreditation for proposed degrees and professional development programs, the following materials and minimum requirements must be submitted and met:

- The institution of interest must present proof that the institution itself is approved to provide education services by the appropriate department of education in its area/country
- The institution of interest must submit a Statement of Financial Viability (The facility will be in existence to maintain its commitment to its clients for the duration the proposed term of accreditation)
- The institution of interest must pay all necessary fees to the International Sports Professionals Association - ISPA™ to cover a two-year accreditation period. These fees are determined after initial consultation. Several factors are included in the determination of these fees (i.e. size of institution, number of programs to be accredited, etc.). This payment must be received prior to review and accreditation to cover ISPA administrative costs and is fully refundable if the institution of interest by reason of the ISPA does not obtain accreditation.
- The institution of interest must provide ISPA Student Accreditation to all students enrolled in ISPA Accredited programs at the beginning of their educational program whom meet and maintain the following standards:
  - Must be in good standing with the institution of interest
  - Must maintain a GPA of 2.5 or higher (or equivalent if not on a 4.0 grading scale)
  - Must have no courses of failure
  - Must have no record of disciplinary action (both from the institution of interest itself and the community law enforcement if known to the institution of interest)
  - Must have demonstrated an involvement in the community throughout his/her educational career – should be facilitated by the institution of interest
- The institution of interest must pay a one-time fee of \$50.00 USD for a two-year ISPA Student Accreditation for each eligible student enrolled in ISPA accredited degree programs according to the guidelines listed above. This fee is generally included in the students' tuition so the students, not the institution of interest, are responsible for the ISPA Student Accreditation fee.
- The institution of interest must submit its Mission Statement to the ISPA. Non-incorporated entities must submit a Statement of Purpose for the training/education program

- The institution of interest must submit the detailed curriculum of the proposed program(s) to be accredited for review
- The institution of interest must submit all pertinent course syllabi of the proposed program(s) to be accredited for review
- The institution of interest must submit a list of all faculty members involved in the proposed program(s) to be accredited and their C.V.s/résumés
- The institution of interest must submit the policies and procedures on identifying and rectifying ethical violations
- The institution of interest must submit its Ethics Statement

## Responsibilities of All Parties Involved

Clear, open and consistent communications are essential in order for the potential benefits of academic accreditation to be fully realized and operate smoothly. The ISPA has developed the following expectations and framework of responsibilities for all parties involved in the accreditation process:

ISPA Management and technical staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring all policies and procedures are made known to all individuals involved and are consistently applied
- Ensuring that all ISPA staff are prepared for and well-informed of all pertinent information and dealings with the institution of interest
- Pursuing only that data and information of which is necessary to make a well-informed judgment of whether or not accreditation criteria has been met
- Providing the institution of interest with all benefits and privileges accompanied by academic accreditation in which are clearly detailed and defined within this document
- Keeping all involved institutional executives consistently and appropriately informed throughout all stages of the accreditation process
- Communicating accurate and consistent information to the institution of interest throughout all stages of the accreditation process
- Identifying and promulgating good and ethical practice while recognizing and respecting the need for appropriate confidentiality throughout the accreditation process
- Providing the institution of interest with a large ISPA Academic Accreditation plaque for display in institution facilities upon approval for accreditation

The higher education institution of interest is responsible for:

- Carefully studying all pertinent ISPA criteria, policies and procedures
- Providing clear, accurate and complete information requested of the institution of interest in applications for accreditation and other associated paperwork
- Committing key staff, both academic and administrative, to the accreditation process. These individuals must be responsible, communicate well and understand all elements of the accreditation process as detailed in this document
- Informing the ISPA of all reasons why academic accreditation is being sought. This is in reference to the context of institutional and program objectives, aims and strategic direction

- Providing constructive and detailed information in a timely manner if any concerns or difficulties emerge during the accreditation process

Both Parties are responsible for:

- Providing forthright and constructive input and evaluation of the accreditation process
- Ensuring open exchange of communication and all necessary materials throughout the accreditation process
- Ensuring candid communication of issues and or concerns identified by either party
- Encouraging openness, flexibility and collaboration in exploring potentially beneficial variations of the accreditation review process

## Academic Accreditation Fee Schedule

The ISPA Academic Accreditation fee schedule is as follows:

### ISPA TWO-YEAR ACADEMIC ACCREDITATION

Initial Application Fee:	\$1,500 USD
Initial Accreditation Fee <u>Per Program</u> :	\$2,500 USD
Site Visit Fee (If Necessary):	TBD*
Student Accreditation <u>Per Student</u> (Required):	\$50 USD **
Renewal Application Fee (After Initial Two-Year Accreditation Period):	\$500 USD
Renewal Accreditation Fee <u>Per Program</u> (After Initial Two-Year Accreditation Period):	\$2,000 USD

\* Determined on a case-by-case basis - varies by location of institution. Many times we find that a site visit is NOT necessary if communication and transparency of information between the ISPA and the institution of interest is exceptional.

\*\* This cost is typically rolled into student tuition by the institution of interest itself. This fee is paid one time per student upon intake. The institution of interest would submit a roster of new student intakes for the semester/quarter. ISPA would then process the accreditation for each student, mail the students' certificates, and invoice the institution of interest for the cost of accreditation. This fee applies to each student enrolled in an ISPA Accredited degree program.

Please do not hesitate to present the ISPA with any cost concerns you may have and/or your own proposed figures. At ISPA, our passion and mission is to help professionals in their service to society. As such, we understand the cost constraints that some departments are under and have made accommodations for schools with limited financial resources in the past. We want your students to achieve great things and have an immediate advantage upon graduating from your institution. We also want to assist your institution in growing and attracting a larger student base based on the value of your programs and this accreditation.

## Academic Accreditation Site Visit Protocol

An initial site visit and/or two-year follow-up site visit may be required at the discretion of the International Sports Professionals Association - ISPA™ with all associated costs being absorbed by the institution of interest. The need for a site visit will be determined by the ISPA once all required application materials and fees have been submitted by the institution of interest to ISPA. Site visits will consist of, but are not limited to, the following:

- Two full days meeting with key faculty and administrative members of the institution of interest
- A team comprised of a minimum of two ISPA Executives to conduct the site review and evaluation
- Site visits must be conducted during a school term so that the visiting ISPA Executives can meet with and converse with staff and students and visit supporting facilities
- Site visits will be followed up with a visit report. This report will be presented to the institution of interest for their records. This report will also be submitted to the ISPA Academic Accreditation Standards Committee and to assist in their decision making process of whether or not to award accreditation to the institution of interest

## **ISPA Contact Information**

The International Sports Professionals Association - ISPA™ prides itself on superior communication both internally and externally. Therefore, we encourage the institution of interest to contact the ISPA should there ever be any reason to do so. We are available Monday through Friday from 9:00 am – 5:00 pm (CST) via telephone, fax or email. The following ISPA Executives are available to assist you with any of your needs:

ISPA International Headquarters Telephone: (312) 920 – 9522

Andrew Teunis, ISPA Director of Business Development: [ATeunis@theISPA.org](mailto:ATeunis@theISPA.org)

Justin Mayer, ISPA Executive Director: [JMayer@theISPA.org](mailto:JMayer@theISPA.org)

Dr. John E. Mayer, ISPA President: [DrMayer@theISPA.org](mailto:DrMayer@theISPA.org)