

The Catholic University Cheerleading Program

Constitution

Introduction

This Constitution is intended to inform cheerleaders (including prospective cheerleaders, parents, relatives, other interested parties) of various policies of the Catholic University Cheerleading Program. In all policy and program matters, members of the cheer squad shall be exemplary representatives of the Catholic University of America. These policies are as follows:

I. MISSION STATEMENT

Team Mission Statement:

The CUA Cheerleading program is a student organization whose mission is to support CUA athletics, promote school spirit and act as ambassadors of the University at CUA Athletic Events, competitions and any other university functions. As a student club sport, CUA Cheerleading supports and does not compromise the student's academic career, while aiding in the development of the student participant into a responsible, mature and independent adult. CUA Cheerleading has three (3) seasons; Football, Men's and Women's Basketball, and a competition team.

With the purpose of promoting personal and professional self-development to the campus community at The Catholic University of America, CUA Cheerleading strives to educate the CUA community about the selfless leadership style of Jesus Christ through sharing and promoting team work and school spirit. The program is a means of improving the student's mental and physical well being. Cheerleading is an activity where the student (1) will be provided leadership training; (2) will develop the ability to make decisions; (3) will enhance the ability to respond to life's situations appropriately, (4) will contribute to social development; and (5) maximize the opportunity for student growth, change, and maturity.

Cheerleader's Mission Statement

The primary purpose of the cheerleader is to be a member of the team, which has as its goal the support of intercollegiate athletics and The Catholic University. That support is directed into three major areas, as follows: (1) to lead cheers; to raise the level of fan support for intercollegiate athletics; to lead in positive vocal support for the team; to solicit that support from Catholic University fans and to project that support to the University and its teams; (2) to participate in the athletic activity known as cheerleading by performing partner stunts, motions, pyramids, gymnastics/tumbling, dance movements; to perfect this athletic activity for keeping the crowd attention/direction focused on the field/floor where the intercollegiate activity is taking place, and for entertainment and competitive purposes; and (3) to serve as public relations ambassadors of intercollegiate athletics and the Catholic University; to uphold, reflect and project the goals and ideals of the University; to appear at University activities, functions and

programs, at charitable and public causes to promote intercollegiate athletics and the University.

II. MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be open to all undergraduate and graduate students at The Catholic University of America who have an interest in the sport of Cheerleading. Membership will be subjected to a set of rules and regulations as listed within this constitution, as well as an evaluation of skills as the beginning of the season of interest so that all prospective members will have an opportunity to participate and grow in skill.

The University's cheer program consists of two teams, The Game Team and the Competitive Team. The Game Team members will cheer for home football games, and/or home men's and women's basketball games. The Competitive Team members must be a member of the Game Team for one season, and have its primary focus be on competitive cheerleading.

IV. OFFICERS

The elected officers of CUA Cheerleading are the President, Vice President, Social Media Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. The term of office will be for the Fall and Spring semesters. The requirements to become an officers are that a person must be a student of The Catholic University of America and maintain a minimum grade point average of 2.5.

All Officers must be Van Certified and complete all trainings required by the Office of Campus Activities.

Duties are as follows:

The President duties include but are not limited to the following, organizing and publicizing tryouts, club registration, completing traveling forms to and from away events, and season closure documentation. The President can delegate tasks as needed. The President may be asked to obtain AACCA certification.

The Vice President completes tasks as delegated by the President, and is in charge in the President's absence. The Vice President will be in charge of recruitment, and will aid the President in organizing and publicizing tryouts. The Vice President is responsible for any and all duties delegated to them by the President. The Vice President also has the option of becoming AACCA certified.

The Treasurer submits and prepares the budget for the three seasons as well as any competition expenses, completes all financial paperwork for the club on the NEST and otherwise. The Treasurer also handles any and all tasks delegated to them by the President and/or Vice President.

Social Media Chair is in charge of running all CUA Cheerleading social media accounts. This includes Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, e-mail, and the website. They will upload pictures, update fans with game times, post status updates on how the cheer team is doing, as well as updates about other CUA athletic teams. The Social Media Chair also handles any and all tasks delegated to them by the President and/or Vice President.

The Secretary annotates each e-board meeting, and communicates with each member of the team about upcoming events. The Secretary also handles any and all tasks delegated to them by the President and/or Vice President.

The officers reserve the right to establish committees as needed. These committees can include, but are not limited to: Fundraising, Social, and Service committees.

Coaching staff is to be selected by a committee made up by the officers. Coaching staff must maintain AACCA or equivalent certification. Coaches are also responsible for the ordering of uniform/ practice gear, practice and game scheduling, team selections, competition schedule, choreography, and instruction.

V. ELECTIONS AND NOMINATIONS

Section 1: Nominations for all officers will take place annually from the members at the last general meeting of the academic year. Any active member may nominate any other voting member, not including himself or herself.

Section 2: Voting will occur by secret ballot and a simple majority vote is required to elect an officer. The Treasurer will count the votes. No person shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

The program's five officers are elected annually. These officers include President, Vice President, Social Media Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. Elections are held for one office at a time. The process begins with opening nominations for President, having the nomination, closing nominations, and holding a paper majority vote. Once the President is selected the same process continues for each officer. Coaches and Advisor reserve the right to appoint a Captain as well as officers.

VI. REMOVAL OF OFFICERS

A person is eligible to be removed from office if the other four members of the executive board and coaches, or if the majority of the organization feel as if they are not fulfilling their responsibilities.

NOTE: Officers that fall below the team's 2.5 GPA requirements will be subject to evaluation, and potential removal from Office.

VII: REPLACEMENT PROCEDURES

To fill a vacant position, an emergency election will be held at the next general meeting. If the position is needed to be filled sooner, the President or Vice President will call for a meeting sooner for the sole purpose of elections.

VIII: MEETING RULES

All meetings of the organization will follow the most up-to-date version of Robert's Rules of Order.

IX: ADVISOR

The advisor of the organization will be selected by a majority vote of the organization. The advisor must be a faculty or staff member of The Catholic University of America.

X: UNIVERSITY POLICY

This organization is to abide by all University policies as laid out at <http://policies.cua.edu>.

XI: NO HAZING STATEMENT

This organization will not participate in any activities which could be regarded as hazing. “Hazing” refers to any activity expected of someone joining a group (or to maintain full status in a group) that humiliates, degrades or risks emotional and/or physical harm, regardless of the person’s willingness to participate.

XII: NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

This organization fully adheres to the University’s non-discrimination policies which can be found at <http://policies.cua.edu/EEO/affirmact.cfm>.

XIII: AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION

Amending the Constitution Section 1: To amend the constitution, the members of the executive board will create an idea of the change and it will be voted on at the next general meeting. Any member can submit ideas for changes in writing to the Officers to be discussed at the next executive board meeting.

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CUA CHEER REQUIREMENTS AND REGULATIONS

III. INVOLVEMENT AT FUNCTIONS/EVENTS

In addition to football and basketball games, practices and pep rallies, cheerleaders attend a number of public relations and/or charitable events and fundraisers each year.

The Head Cheer Coach and/or Advisor shall approve all appearances by the cheerleaders in advance, to ensure the event is appropriate for the team.

The cheerleaders shall appear only at events/activities which will reflect positively on them as individuals, and as representatives of the squad, the Athletic Department and the University.

With due consideration to the size of the event, priority for appearances shall be in the following order: Catholic University Athletic Department events/activities, Catholic University Alumni Association and other Catholic University events and activities, charitable events/activities, and public relations events/activities.

Cheerleaders shall not make appearances at political events/activities. In committing to an appearance for the cheerleaders, the advisor and/or head coach shall give first consideration to the student's academic career and, in particular, attendance at classes. Other considerations to be weighed include (a) number of activities in that week, (b) the function or contribution of the cheerleaders at the event/activity, (c) the nature of the event/activity, (d) cost and/or travel expenses and distance to the event/activity, and (e) other valid considerations.

Agreement of Appearance: Athlete hereby grants to the Team and its related affiliates the exclusive right to use his/her name and to photograph, videotape and use in any medium his/her image, likeness, or voice for advertising or promoting the Team, the programs of the Team, or any other promotion associated with the Team without reservation or limitation. Athlete further agrees to strictly comply with the Team's dress code/uniform policy when performing services for the Team hereunder.

IV. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Cheerleaders are reminded that, as highly visible members of the University community, their actions and behavior are under constant observation. While in uniform, but also while not in uniform, Catholic University cheerleaders are known, subject to scrutiny, and can easily be the object of criticism for their behavior or actions, in particular, for indulging or for overindulging in alcoholic beverages.

While traveling off the campus to selected away games or other official functions, it is strongly suggested cheerleaders who are 21 or over may not consume or possess alcoholic beverages. Any Cheerleader under the legal drinking age (21) will not, under any circumstances, consume or possess alcoholic beverages under penalty of law, and university policy.

Members of the squad shall adhere to the following rules:

- Cheerleaders shall not consume or possess alcoholic beverages while in uniform
- Cheerleaders shall not consume alcoholic beverages before or during a game or practice, or attend any practices, games, or functions while under the influence
- Cheerleaders shall not offer to procure alcoholic beverages for cheerleaders who are under 21, or attempt to coerce cheerleaders who are under 21 or who do not want to drink alcoholic beverages into the activity as this qualifies as Hazing.
- Cheerleaders who violate these rules shall be subject to serious disciplinary measures up to and including immediate dismissal from the squad.
- In addition, University officials shall not purchase or furnish alcoholic beverages for cheerleaders at any University event/function.
- In summary, cheerleaders are expected to abide by University rules and regulations and the laws and ordinances of the city or state in which they live or travel.

V. DRUG POLICY

The University is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for the cheerleading program. Thus, conduct which involves the unlawful possession, use, dispensation, distribution or manufacture of controlled substances by a cheerleader while traveling for the University or at any official cheerleading function/activity shall result in termination from the Catholic University cheer program. Similarly, the unlawful possession, use, distribution or manufacturing of controlled **substances by a cheerleader at any other time shall result in appropriate discipline, up to and including termination from the cheer program and forfeit of deposit; any sanction for such a violation outside of cheerleading functions/activities shall be with consideration to the potential embarrassment or bad reflection on the cheer program, the Athletic Department and/or the University.** Only the legal use of prescribed medicines under the direction of a personal licensed physician is permitted.

The cheer program has a “zero tolerance” for illegal drug use. Anyone that uses illegal drugs should not try out for the squad.

VI. RULES AND REGULATIONS OF ACTIVITY

A. Evaluations

1. Anyone wishing to try out for The Game Team shall:
 - a. meet tryout requirements,
 - b. maintain a 2.5 grade point average,
 - c. be accepted to Catholic University, in the process of being accepted to the University, or be a current student.
2. For justifiable reason(s), the cheerleading coach can make an exception to rules A. 1. a. and above.
3. Cheerleaders will be chosen at the spring/summer Evaluation. There shall be an October evaluation for the basketball Game Team and the Competitive Squad. Both evaluations will accommodate those that were not able to make the spring evaluations. The max number of cheerleaders are set at 24 for each team.
5. There may be additional members of the squad named after tryouts by coach, with advice from the members of the squad. The coach, in selecting additional members of the squad, will give consideration to the physical size and general composition of the squad, academic grade point standing, placement in tryouts, etc.
6. Evaluations for the Competitive Team will take place in towards the end of the fall semester. There will be separate evaluations to fill the basketball squad and to determine the Competitive team for the year.
 - a. Requirements for the competitive team will be harder than those for the Game Team and consist of a minimum score to make the team. Requirements can be (but are not limited to): tumbling (minimum standing handspring), single leg stunts, fitness requirements, flexibility requirements, experience, ability to

perform, jump requirements and other elements as determined by the coaching staff at the beginning of the year.

b. These requirements will be made known well before evaluations and each member interested in trying out will know what is required of them.

B. General

1. Cheerleaders shall:

a. Maintain a 2.5 grade point average. Members of each team will give progressive grade reports to the coaches so that the academic standard can be kept for each team member.

b. Be enrolled as a full-time student of The Catholic University of America on the Washington, DC campus.

c. All members of the team must complete the impact test set forth by The Catholic University of America before the first practice and/or tryout of the season. Failure to do so will bar the member from participating until the test is complete.

2. **Cheerleaders shall not use illegal substances. They may not smoke or consume alcohol while wearing their uniform, CUA cheer apparel, CUA Athletics apparel, or other CUA gear. (See Section VI. Alcoholic Beverages, this document.)**

3. While in uniform, Cheerleaders shall not go into any place where alcoholic beverages are served. Exceptions will be determined by the coaches; these exceptions could be events such as an official appearance at Catholic University Athletics or Catholic University Alumni Association events.

5. Each cheerleader is financially responsible, at this time, to pay dues, outlined at the beginning of each season by the executive board and the coaches.

6. Each cheerleader shall have a completed physical by a physician prior to attending the college cheerleading camp at the end of the summer or prior to the first day or practice (whichever comes first).

7. Each squad member is required to pay dues as stated in number 5. Each squad member is responsible for all of the clothing, uniforms, and equipment assigned to him/her. Care must be taken to insure such clothing, uniforms, and equipment is in a clean and presentable condition. Each squad member shall safeguard his/her clothing, uniforms, and equipment and shall be, therefore, personally liable for its replacement for loss or damage, excluding normal wear and tear. **Under no circumstance should any part of a cheerleading uniform be loaned to a non-cheerleader or worn outside of a cheerleading function.** CUA reserves the right to place holds on the accounts of students who do not return their uniform in a timely manner and not refund any deposit for uniform that has been severely damaged, lost, stolen or misplaced.

8. Other rules concerning cheerleaders may be promulgated verbally or in written form by the coaches. Violation of these additional rules may result in disciplinary action.

10. Violations of any cheerleading rule shall subject the squad member to discipline. The coaches, with consultation and advice of the advisor, always determines final discipline. In most cases, executive board with the coaches will be advised/ consulted with in relation to a squad member's discipline.

9. A serious violation of these rules or repeated violations shall result in one being suspended from the squad and/or removed from the team. A squad member may be suspended from cheering one or more games due to violations of these rules or for the season.

10. Any sanction, write up, etc. for a violation outside of cheerleading functions/ activities shall be assessed by the coaches, and will be dealt with in accordance with University policy.

C. Practices

1. Cheerleaders shall:

a. **Attend all practices**, normally 3 - 4 times a week, depending on the season. Only three absences are allowed per semester. More than three will result in temporary probation.

b. **Not be tardy** or absent from practice. Tardiness will result in team and individual punishment. Each tardy will be counted as an absence, as well as three tardies or early dismissals.

c. **Notify coaches and executive board** as soon as possible if he/she finds it impossible to attend practice or knows he/she is going to be tardy. Excused absences only consist of the following: an academic function, a death in the family, or serious illness/injury.

d. **Never consume alcoholic beverages/illegal substances** in accordance with previously mentioned policies.

e. **Wear provided practice attire appropriately.**

D. Games

1. Cheerleaders shall:

a. Attend all home football, basketball games, required scrimmages, and/or special scheduled games or activities as determined by the coaches.

b. Arrive at the game site at the time determined by the coaches or Executive Board. Failure to arrive on time will result in specified team and individual punishment.

c. **Never consume alcoholic beverages/ illegal substances before a game.**

d. Know all the required material for a game under penalty of sitting out the game.

2. All cheerleaders are required to cheer all scheduled regular season and postseason games as determined by the coaches. **This may cause the cheerleader to be on campus for some school breaks, including spring and/or summer break.**

E. Travel

1. Travel off campus for practices, events, and competitions will be in accordance with budget restrictions and in accordance with the NCAA, and Catholic University rules and regulations.

2. The squad will travel with a chaperone as a group and return as a group. If a cheerleader chooses to go to or from a game by other transportation, he/she must notify coaches first hand as soon as possible.
3. Final authority of all decisions made while traveling shall rest with the coaches.
4. An itinerary will be prepared and given to each cheerleader who is traveling. The itinerary will be determined by the coaches, according to the event, and will include times of departure, arrival, important information, appropriate gear, etc. Squad members shall adhere to the itinerary.
5. When only a specific number of cheerleaders are attending an event, final authority on who goes rests with the coaching staff.

G. Competitions

The competition team will compete at least once at a national, regional, local and/or exhibition competitions and will be expected to adhere to all policies, specifically practices, games, and travel. Further policies regarding competitions are subject to be added by the coaches and executive board.

VII. INJURIES/ILLNESSES

Any illness or injury shall be reported to the coaches immediately.

Any injury suffered during practices, games, or other official functions will be treated by the local hospital/treating entity. Initial expenses for such treatment shall be paid by the squad member's personal insurance up to the amount of the applicable insurance policy. Cheerleaders are covered under CUA's secondary accident insurance for injuries occurred during **games or practices for NCAA sanctioned activities**. After the cheerleader's insurance has been billed, the secondary insurance company will then be billed for remaining costs.

If an injury or illness incapacitates a squad member, he/she shall not be permitted to practice and cheer for a period of time as determined by a doctor or athletic trainer. Generally, another member shall replace an injured/ill member of the squad until he/she is fully recovered. Return to participation at games or practices may be determined by a doctor or athletic trainer, including the discretion of the coaches.

If a doctor recommends that a squad member no longer cheer, due to injury or a health problem, the squad member shall be removed from the squad. If chronic illness or injury causes a squad member to miss games or practices repeatedly, they will be required to meet with the coaches to fairly assess their situation.

Injured or sick team members are required to attend practices and games as determined by the coaching staff under the direction of the athletic training staff/or attending physician.

VIII. HEALTH, LIFESTYLE AND NUTRITION

Introduction

The Catholic University cheerleading program is committed to promoting and fostering healthy lifestyles for squad members. Conduct which opposes this philosophy and/or conduct which poses unacceptable risk and disregard for the health, safety and welfare of participants violates this policy and will result in disciplinary action as determined by the coaching staff.

One primary activity of the Catholic University cheerleaders is the partner stunt (double stunt). Pyramids are partner stunts combined vertically (in levels, not to exceed two-and-one-half human heights) and horizontally (side-by-side partner stunts). The nature of these activities demands certain general physical requirements of the Catholic University cheerleader. Male team members must have sufficient strength to base pyramids, lift, hold, throw and catch females safely. Female team members must be able to base pyramids, lift, hold throw and catch other females and/or be lifted caught or thrown. While there is no weight, or height requirements to be a member of the CUA Game Team, each member must be able to perform the appropriate previously listed activities consistently and safely during the entire school year.

Fitness Program Requirements

All squad members are subjected to the fitness requirements determined by the coaching staff at the beginning of each season, in accordance to the team(s) that they are on.

All members are expected to work out in their own free time to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

The most important part of this policy is the goal of teaching squad members nutritious eating habits. “Crash” diets and unhealthy exercise habits are strongly discouraged and will be addressed if the issue arises. General fitness counseling is an on-going part of this program.

IX. SAFETY

The increased athletic activity in cheerleading has resulted in an increased concern for safety. Cheerleading involves a variety of gymnastics, motions, partner stunts, rotations, pyramids, dance, and other high impact activities; cheerleading involves a certain amount of danger of personal injury. Cheerleaders are placed on notice that improper conduct of cheerleading activity may result in catastrophic injury, paralysis or even death. In becoming a participant in this program, a cheerleader voluntarily assumes the risk involved by participating in cheerleading practices, games, and other activities.

The Catholic University program has adopted policies the American Association of Cheerleading Coaches and Advisors (AACCA). All squad members shall be thoroughly

familiar with and shall carefully abide by the AACCA guidelines. Cheerleaders are aware that the failure to abide by the AACCA guidelines may result in immediate and serious discipline to include possible dismissal from the squad. Cheerleaders may be required to take and pass a safety test at the beginning of football and basketball seasons.

AACCA guidelines are available online. If a squad member has a question or concern they should ask the coaching staff. <http://acca.org/default.aspx>

The American Association for Cheerleading Coaches and Advisors (AACCA) publication, CHEERLEADING SAFETY MANUAL, is required reading for the coaching staff, cheerleading advisor(s), and executive board. Cheerleaders are encouraged to check it out and read it carefully.

X. Amendments

Amendments to this constitution will be made by the officers and coaches periodically and informed directly to the members of the team.