

FOOTBALL OPERATIONS

# A HEAD COACH'S GUIDE

TO THE COLLEGE  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE





# THE COLLEGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE



## MISSION

The College Advisory Committee (CAC) was developed for the 1994 NFL Draft at the request of the American Football Coaches Association to serve in a limited advisory capacity for underclassmen who are seriously considering entry into the NFL Draft.

The Committee is made up of high level personnel evaluators from the NFL's clubs, along with directors from the League's two sanctioned scouting organizations (National Football Scouting and BLESTO).

While the Committee's evaluation is only an opinion, and NOT to be considered binding in any way, or a guarantee that a player will be drafted in a certain round, or at all, it is an objective evaluation where experienced professionals can offer an informed assessment of a player's draft potential.

The Committee actively encourages underclassmen to maintain an open dialogue with their head coach throughout the Advisory and Special Eligibility process, and will provide the head coach with player evaluation results.

Only five evaluations will be accepted per team. Additional players on your team may be evaluated, subject to approval of the Committee on a case by case basis. Evaluated players will be advised whether they have the potential to be drafted in the first or second round, OR, if they should remain a student-athlete maturing as a potential professional prospect while continuing their education.

Due to the variable factors that impact a player's position in the NFL Draft, the Committee strongly recommends underclassmen staying in school to complete their education and college football eligibility. Statistics indicate that the vast majority of student-athletes benefit by completing their eligibility.





## ELIGIBILITY

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR A CAC EVALUATION?

- Underclassmen who have had at least three full college football seasons elapse since high school graduation.
- Underclassmen who are eligible to return for the upcoming season.
- Only underclassmen who are **seriously** considering petitioning for special eligibility for the NFL Draft may request evaluations.

### WHO IS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR A CAC EVALUATION?

- Players who do not have remaining eligibility or who are no longer enrolled in school.
- Players who are interested in obtaining an evaluation for insurance reasons.

- FOR INSURANCE INFORMATION, players should contact the NCAA's Exceptional Student-Athlete Disability Insurance Program at: <http://www.ncaa.org/> or in writing to the Program Administrator at:

HCC Specialty Underwriters  
401 Edgewater Place, Suite  
400 Wakefield, Massachusetts  
01880 Phone: 800-927-6306  
Fax: 781-994-6001

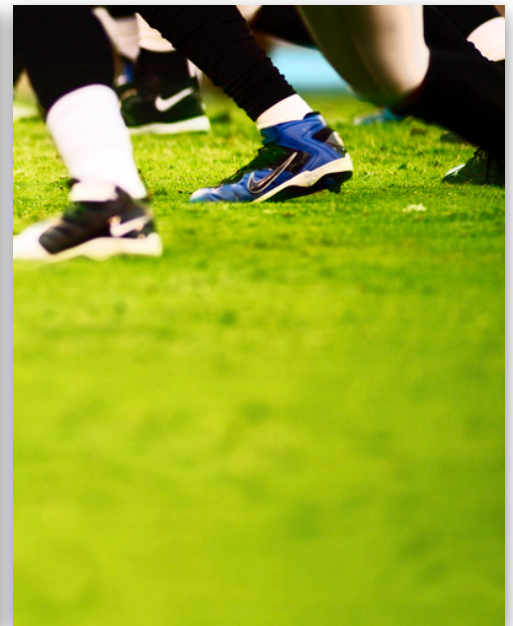
# REQUESTING EVALUATION

## DATES & DEADLINES

- Eligible underclassmen may request a CAC Evaluation upon conclusion of their collegiate football regular season.
- In order to ensure that an evaluation is completed and provided to the player in a timely manner, requests for a CAC Evaluation should be received no later than Monday, December 15, 2014. Though requests will be accepted after that date through Friday, January 2, 2015, there is no guarantee that an evaluation can be completed and returned to the player prior to the deadline for applying for special eligibility.
- If an underclassman decides to declare for the NFL Draft, the Petition for Special Eligibility must be received by the NFL Commissioner's office no later than Thursday, January 15, 2015.

## EVALUATION FORM/ REQUIREMENTS

- Evaluation requests should be administered only through the Head Coach, Pro Liaison or Director of Football Operations. A player who calls the NFL office for an evaluation request will be directed to contact these members of the football staff.
- All requests for evaluations must include an **official** copy of the player's college transcripts.
- Requests may be submitted through the **College Relations Website: ([apps.nfl.net/CollegeRelations](http://apps.nfl.net/CollegeRelations))**. In certain cases it will be permissible to submit a request via hard copy.
- Completed requests can also be emailed to [nflplayerpersonnel@nfl.com](mailto:nflplayerpersonnel@nfl.com) or faxed to 212-847-1881. Please confirm receipt on all submissions. Calls may be directed to the NFL Player Personnel Department at 212-450-2215.







## THE EVALUATION

- The evaluation result will be the Committee's best estimate of the player's potential to be drafted. It is non-binding and not a guarantee.
- **Players will be advised of one of the following:**
  - (a)** they have the potential to be drafted as high as the first round;
  - (b)** they have the potential to be drafted as high as the second round;
  - (c)** they should remain a student-athlete maturing as a potential professional prospect while continuing their education.
- The evaluation is based on football ability only. It does not take into account injuries, perceived strength or weakness of a particular year's draft class, performances at the scouting combine or pro timing days, or any other factor that may influence a player's draft status.
- When an evaluation is complete, a representative of the NFL Commissioner's office will contact each player and head coach by private telephone conversation. The player and head coach will also receive the evaluation result in writing.
- The evaluation is confidential. Only the player and his head coach are notified of the result. Results will not be given to agents, family members, media, or NFL clubs.
- Each player is strongly encouraged to discuss his evaluation result and any decisions regarding declaration of special eligibility with his head coach.





## HOW YOU CAN HELP

*The CAC limits requests for evaluations to five per team. Additional players on your team may be evaluated, subject to approval of the CAC on a case by case basis. We ask for your assistance in allowing us to provide the most thorough, comprehensive, and timely evaluations for your players.*

- **Encourage players to COMPLETE their education and college football eligibility.** There are no guarantees with the NFL Draft. Statistics indicate that the vast majority of student-athletes benefit by completing their eligibility.
- **Send in your requests EARLY.** While evaluations are done on a rolling basis, requests submitted in a timely manner will result in a player receiving his evaluation at the earliest time possible.
- **Send in all evaluation request forms TOGETHER.** Sending in all requests from your school at one time expedites the evaluation process.
- **Send in your GAME VIDEO.** Please confirm that game footage has been sent to our Dub Center at NFL Films. Delays in receiving game footage may result in your players not receiving evaluations.
- **Certify LEGITIMATE evaluation requests.** The Head Coach should consult with every potential applicant to verify that the request is appropriate. Requests by players who have no intention of applying for special eligibility place an unnecessary burden on the CAC and delay the response time for players who are seriously considering entry into the NFL Draft.





## FOOTBALL OPERATIONS

Dear Prospect,

As an underclassman considering giving up your final year of college eligibility to turn pro, you are about to make one of the most important decisions in your life.

There are many more talented college players than places on NFL teams. This is simply arithmetic. In fact, your chances of making an NFL team are about the same as getting struck by lightning, winning the lottery or surviving a plane crash. This is a very important decision. It will change your life forever. Make sure you know all the facts.

As a former first round draft pick who went on to play 15 years in the NFL, I know that waiting a year greatly improved my prospects of being drafted higher, making the team, and having a long NFL career.

In my junior year, I was projected to be drafted in the second or third round. I got a lot of advice from my family, my coaches, my teammates and others who I trusted. Plenty of people told me to leave school. But in the end, I knew that an extra year of maturity,

more reps on the field, and, most importantly, getting my education, would serve me better than rushing into the unknown. After considering all the facts, I stayed in school. And it paid off.

Football is not your only path to financial freedom. Long after your playing experience ends, your education will remain. It is often the degree of separation between opportunity and misfortune. As the only former player who is an NFL Executive Vice President, I speak again from experience. Your financial freedom is in your education.

Know the facts and take advantage available to you. Get a true evaluation. Don't change your life forever without having all the information. Share this information and discuss it with your parents, friends, advisors, coaches and teammates.

The choice you are about to make will have life-long consequences. Get evaluated. Seek sound advice. Know your facts. Make the right choice.

God's Best,

Troy Vincent, Sr.  
Executive Vice President  
NFL Football Operations



# MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE/ KNOW THE FACTS

There are many factors that impact a player's potential to be drafted. Entering the NFL Draft as an underclassmen has significant risks. **Before making any decisions, make sure that your player has all the facts.**

- There are no guarantees for underclassmen in the NFL Draft.
- If he declares for the Draft and is not selected, he loses his college eligibility.
- In 2013 and 2014, 34% of underclassmen entering the draft who received an evaluation of third round or below were not selected at all.
- An underclassman's potential draft position could increase by playing out his eligibility, having the extra season of both mental and physical maturity, and degree completion.

## WHY THE **NFL** WANTS ATHLETES TO STAY IN SCHOOL

The majority of underclassmen are not physically or mentally prepared to enter the NFL and would benefit from another year of playing college football. An additional year of development, maturity, experience, and competition at the college level may help your prospect to be drafted higher and have a longer, more successful NFL experience.

Players who make the transition to the NFL before they are ready, even those players who are drafted, may have a more difficult time adjusting to increased expectations, pressures, and level of play in the NFL, or struggle to make an NFL roster.

If your student-athlete's goal is to play in the NFL, his best chance at achieving a successful playing experience may be to stay in school and complete his education and college football eligibility.





## INCREASING DRAFT POTENTIAL

By remaining in college and improving their football ability, student-athletes have the potential to significantly improve their Draft position. Here are examples of players selected in the 2014 NFL Draft who were evaluated by the NFL College Advisory Committee in 2013.

- All of these players were unlikely to be selected in the first three rounds of the 2013 NFL Draft.
- All of these players returned to their colleges to complete their remaining football eligibility.
- All of these players went on to have productive senior seasons at their colleges.
- All of these players were selected in the first or second rounds of the 2014 NFL Draft.

PLAYER	POS	COLLEGE	2013 CAC EVALUATION	NFL DRAFT YEAR	ROUND	OVERALL	CLUB
MACK, KHALIL	LB	BUFFALO	4-7 ROUNDS	2014	1	5	OAK
DONALD, AARON	DT	PITTSBURGH	4-7 ROUNDS	2014	1	13	SL
FULLER, KYLE	DB	VIRGINIA TECH	4-7 ROUNDS	2014	1	14	CHI
VERRETT, JASON	DB	TEXAS CHRISTIAN	4-7 ROUNDS	2014	1	25	SD
CARR, DEREK	QB	FRESNO STATE	4-7 ROUNDS	2014	2	36	OAK
HAGEMAN, RA'SHEDE	DT	MINNESOTA	4-7 ROUNDS	2014	2	37	ATL
JOYNER, LAMARCUS	DB	FLORIDA STATE	4-7 ROUNDS	2014	2	41	SL
MATTHEWS, JORDAN	WR	VANDERBILT	4-7 ROUNDS	2014	2	42	PHI
RICHBURG, WESTON	C	COLORADO STATE	4-7 ROUNDS	2014	2	43	NYG
ATTAOCHU, JEREMIAH	LB	GEORGIA TECH	4-7 ROUNDS	2014	2	50	SD
EALY, KONY	DE	MISSOURI	4-7 ROUNDS	2014	2	60	CAR
BRITT, JUSTIN	T	MISSOURI	4-7 ROUNDS	2014	2	64	SEA

Players who are selected in higher Draft rounds are also more likely to make an NFL roster and have longer football playing experiences.



## A RISKY DECISION

With a limited number of Draft slots and an increase of underclassmen entering the Draft, players may be drafted lower than their expectations, or possibly not at all. The more players who enter the Draft, the greater the risk that a player is pushed down into later Draft rounds, or entirely off a team's Draft board.

In 2014, 107 underclassmen entered the Draft. Of the 107 underclassmen who gave up their remaining college football eligibility, 44 were not drafted at all. Of the drafted players, 22 were selected later than the third round. Keep in mind that the supply of mid-round players is greater than the demand.

There are hundreds of players every year who do not receive a phone call during the Draft telling them that they have been selected. Many of those undrafted college players will never have the opportunity to make an NFL team.

A recent "Bleacher Report" stated, ***"Darrington Sentimore is full of regret. He was a defensive tackle at Tennessee in 2012. A good one. He passed up his senior season in 2013 because an agent told him he would be a middle round draft pick. He wasn't drafted."***

***"I made a bad decision. A lot of guys like me are sitting at home wishing they had that degree."***  
— Darrington Sentimore, defensive tackle, Tennessee Volunteers

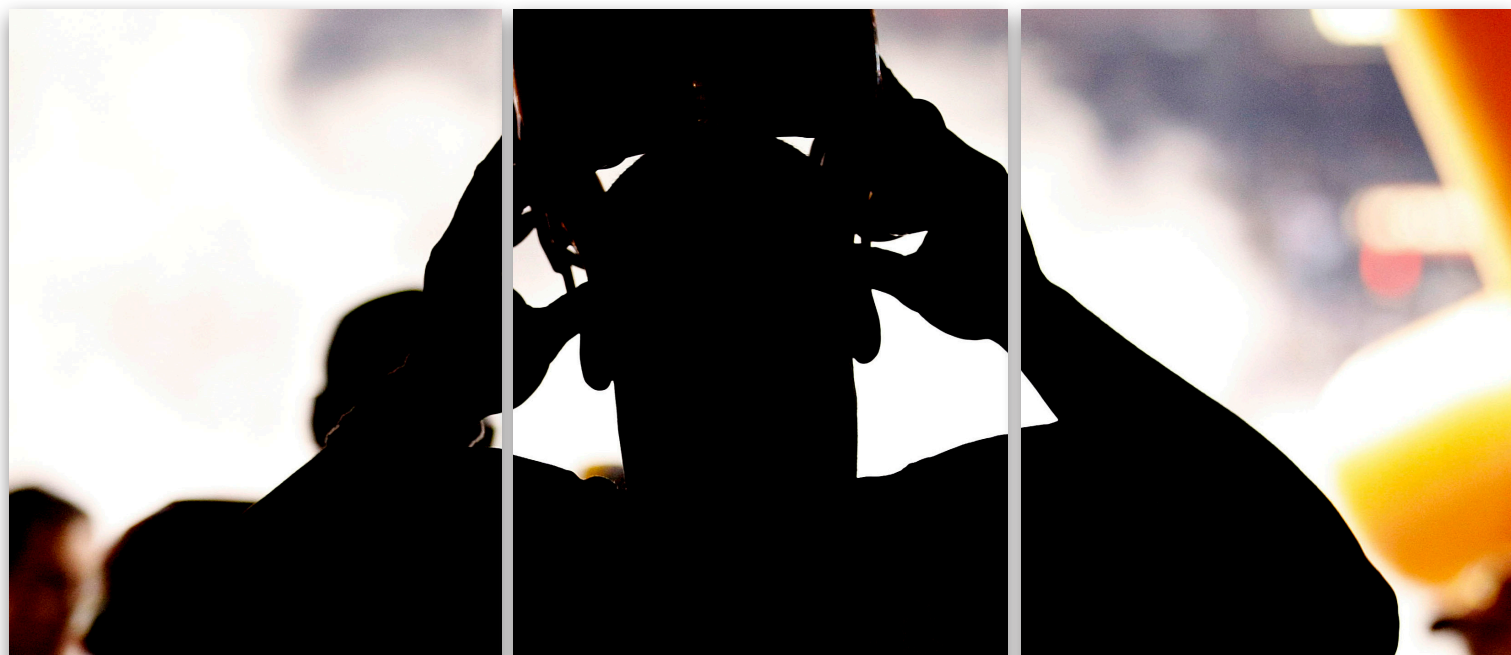
## ODDS OF MAKING IT IN THE NFL

Only 1.6% of all NCAA football players make it to a professional level.

For players who do make an NFL roster, the average length of playing experience is 4.74 years. That is just the average. Some positions are higher, others are lower. For example, the average playing experience over the past 20 years for the following positions are:

- **Running Back, 4.25 years,**
- **Wide Receiver, 4.16 years,**
- **Defensive Back, 4.60 years,**
- **Offensive Line, 5.04 years,**
- **Quarterback, 5.10 years,**
- **Linebacker, 4.85 years,**
- **Defensive Lineman, 4.74 years,**
- **Kicker, 5.07 years**

There are only 53 spots on each NFL team's roster, with a limited number of those spots open to competition. Last year, 928 players lost their jobs during roster cuts before the NFL season even started. Undrafted free agents are even less likely to make an NFL roster.





## CONSIDER THE SOURCE

Everyone seems to have an opinion, a ranking, or an idea of the round where a player is likely to be drafted. It is important to realize that rankings or grades that come from the media, “draft analysts,” or agents don’t reflect the intricate scouting work done by NFL teams, don’t influence the Draft selection process in any way, and can be extremely misleading, disappointing, and inaccurate.

Student-athletes should not believe hype. The only evaluations that impact a prospect’s potential to be drafted are the ones determined by an NFL team’s personnel evaluators, decision makers, and medical staff. Any other draft grade or draft projection that does not come from the NFL offers no assurance of being drafted by an NFL team, no matter how informed other sources might appear.

## COLLEGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

One way to determine a more realistic estimate of draft potential is to request a confidential evaluation by the NFL College Advisory Committee.

The Committee is made up of high-level personnel talent evaluators from the NFL teams and will give an objective evaluation of potential to be drafted.

The Committee’s evaluation is a preliminary evaluation that is based only on football ability. When it comes to the Draft, NFL teams look at many more factors including injuries, medical, character, and other qualities such as work ethic, intelligence, and ability to compete. A player with exceptional physical talent may be given a positive Draft evaluation by the Committee, but may fall on NFL team Draft boards because of measurables, injuries, character, or other concerns that are not identified until later in the process.

While not a guarantee, the Committee is most accurate when projecting first and second round talent. NFL personnel evaluators may be in consensus when evaluating the top talent in a Draft class, but opinions tend to vary in the later rounds.

### ***Note the following data:***

In 2014, the College Advisory Committee evaluated 35 underclassmen as having Draft potential “as high as the third round,” which would be an almost impossible result with only 36 total selection slots in the third round of the 2014 Draft.

Of the 35 players evaluated as having Draft potential “as high as the third round,” 21 entered the NFL Draft. Nine players were drafted later than projected by the Committee; another three were not drafted at all.

**In 2014, 57.1% of underclassmen who were evaluated as having the potential to be drafted as high as the third round were drafted later than projected or not at all.**

The risk is even greater for players who are not evaluated as likely to be drafted in the first, second, or third rounds of the Draft. **Since 2012, some 50% of players who were evaluated by the Committee as unlikely to be drafted in the first three rounds, and who also entered the Draft, were not drafted in any round.**



## THE DRAFT EVALUATION PROCESS – WHY DRAFT POSITION MAY FALL

***There are few chances to improve draft position prior to the NFL Draft, but there are many chances to hurt it.***

NFL teams do not have access to underclassmen during the fall football season. They haven't interviewed the prospects, talked to coaches, administered physical examinations, reviewed medical history, studied injuries, or evaluated character. They don't know a player's drive, competitiveness, physical and mental toughness, workout habits, or any of his intangibles.

The entrance of other underclassmen into the Draft may also negatively impact Draft position. The assessment of other underclassmen's draft potential, including players at the same position, and the order in which all prospects may be ranked on a

team's Draft board, may cause a prospect to be drafted later than anticipated, or not at all. In 2014, 107 underclassmen, more than three rounds of players, entered the draft.

An evaluation by the College Advisory Committee is based only on a review of performance on game film. A student-athlete's injury history, academic issues, and accurate measurables all play a role in determining draft position, and in many cases have a negative cumulative effect.

**It is much more difficult to maintain or improve a CAC draft grade than it is to fall down draft boards, making it more likely to be drafted lower than projected, or potentially not at all.**

In 2013 and 2014, 46 of 51 underclassmen (90.2%) receiving a 4th –7th round grade who declared for the Draft were drafted as projected or lower. The five who were drafted higher than projected were selected in the third round; none were selected in the first or second round.

**More than half, 26 of 51 (51.0%), of the underclassmen receiving a 4th–7th round grade went undrafted.**

**Underclassmen declaring for the NFL draft with a grade below the 3rd round are five times more likely to go undrafted than they are to raise their draft position by one round.**



## THE VALUE OF EDUCATION

Players who remain in college during their senior season often develop leadership roles, a quality that NFL teams value when selecting players.

Having a college degree is also valued. Chip Kelly, Head Coach of the Philadelphia Eagles, recently said, “Number one, intelligence is a huge part of what we’re looking for in every aspect of what we do, whether it’s offense, defense, or special teams. So the fact that they have a degree proves where they are at from an intelligence standpoint. College graduates show you the intelligence factor.”

“Number two, it shows that they are committed to establishing goals and following through on their goals,” Kelly said. “We look at the player’s accomplishments. It’s always a plus when you have a degree. Teams that are really successful seem to have the most college graduates.”

“You’ve faced some adversity, whether it’s in school or on the football field. It’s evidence that you are driven. It shows what we’re looking for here, that combination of mental toughness and that high intelligence. A college degree is just another indication.”

In addition, very few NFL contracts are guaranteed. Players with college degrees have longer NFL experiences and earn higher average salaries. Financial freedom is in education, not in the prospect of an NFL experience.

A student-athlete should not underestimate the importance of having a college degree or allow short-term, often unrealistic, incentives to lead to long-term regrets.







## THE MYTH OF “STARTING YOUR CLOCK”

Every year, some college players are enticed to enter the NFL Draft by a misguided message or pressure to “start their clocks.”

In order to “start his clock,” a drafted player would have to make an NFL roster and play for at least three years. Remember, if a prospect doesn’t make the team, his clock doesn’t start.

The average NFL experience lasts only 4.74 years. Many NFL players will not remain in the League long enough to reach a second contract.

Entering the NFL Draft is a risk and does not offer a secure future. By remaining in college and improving football ability, a prospect improves his chances of achieving a longer and more sustainable NFL experience. The higher a prospect is drafted, the more likely he may be to reach a second contract.





# FOOTBALL OPERATIONS

## CONTACT INFORMATION:

College Advisory Committee

Attention: Player Personnel Department

National Football League

345 Park Avenue

New York, NY 10154

Phone: 212-450-2215

Fax: 212-847-1881

Email: [nflplayerpersonnel@nfl.com](mailto:nflplayerpersonnel@nfl.com)

**2014-2015 COLLEGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**