



FOOTBALL OPERATIONS

# ***A HEAD COACH'S GUIDE***

**TO THE COLLEGE  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**



# THE COLLEGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## MISSION

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

The Committee is comprised of senior personnel evaluators from the NFL's clubs, together with directors from the League's two sanctioned scouting organizations (National Football Scouting and BLESTO).

The Committee's evaluation is only an opinion. It is NOT to be considered binding in any way. Nor does it constitute a guarantee that a player will be drafted in a certain round, or that he will be drafted at all. It is an objective evaluation by experienced professionals who offer an informed assessment of a player's draft potential.

The CAC actively encourages underclassmen to maintain an open dialogue with their college head coaches throughout the Advisory and Special Eligibility process. The Committee will provide head coaches with player evaluation results to facilitate those discussions.

Only five requests for evaluations will be accepted per school. Additional players on your team may be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, subject to Committee approval. Players will be advised whether the CAC believes they have the potential to be drafted in the first or second round, OR whether they should remain in school to develop further as a potential professional prospect while continuing their education.

Because of the many factors that can bear upon a player's selection in the NFL Draft, the Committee strongly recommends that underclassmen remain in school to complete their educations and college football eligibility. Statistics indicate that the vast majority of student-athletes benefit from completing their eligibility and obtaining their college degree.





## DATES & DEADLINES

Eligible underclassmen may request a CAC Evaluation after the conclusion of their respective college football regular seasons.

To ensure a timely evaluation, requests should be received no later than Friday, December 15, 2017. Although requests will be accepted until Monday, January 1, 2018, there is no guarantee that an evaluation can be completed and returned to the player prior to Monday, January 15, 2018, the deadline for applying for special eligibility.

Evaluation requests should be submitted exclusively through the school's Head Coach, Pro Liaison or Director of Football Operations. If a player calls the NFL office to request an evaluation, he will be directed to contact his college head coach.

All requests for evaluation must include an official copy of the player's transcripts from every college that the player has attended.

Requests are submitted through the College Relations Website: ([apps.nfl.net/CollegeRelations](https://apps.nfl.net/CollegeRelations)).

Questions may be directed to the NFL Player Personnel Department at 212-450-2215 or [nflplayerpersonnel@nfl.com](mailto:nflplayerpersonnel@nfl.com).



# ELIGIBILITY

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR A CAC EVALUATION?

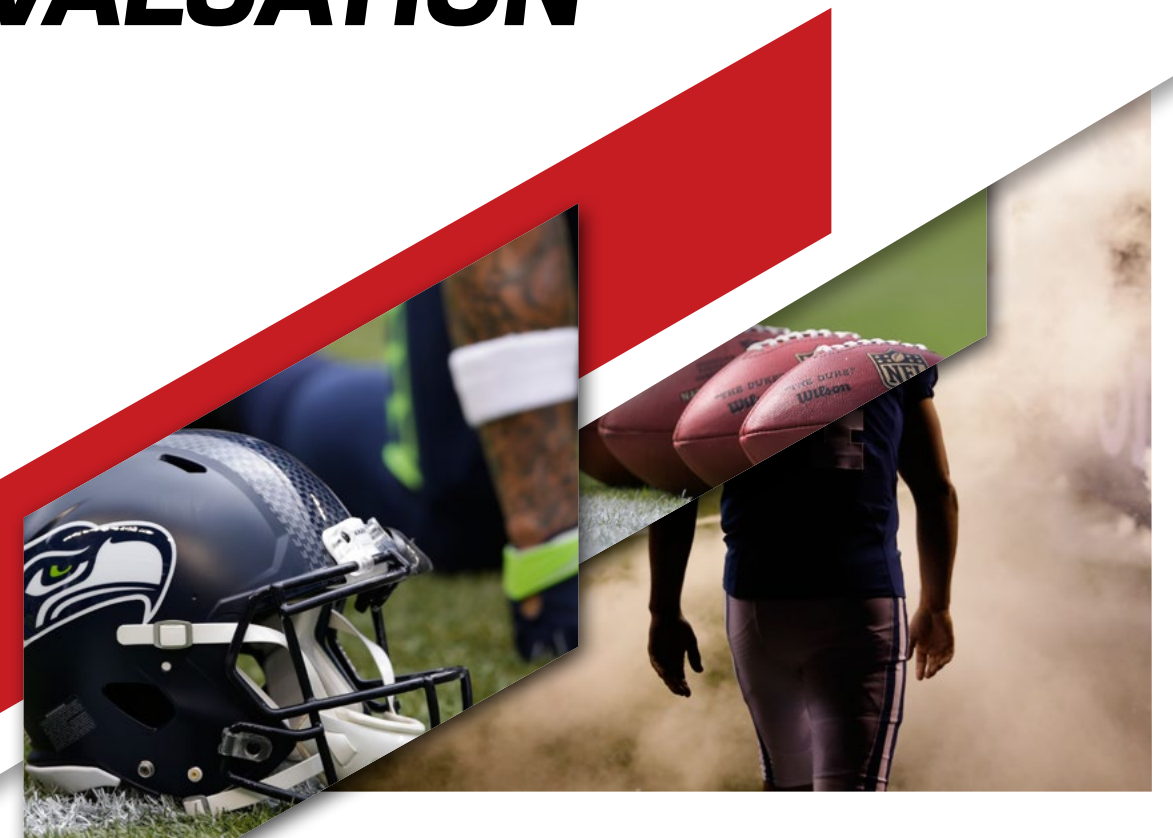
- Underclassmen for whom at least three full college football seasons have elapsed since their high school graduations.
- Underclassmen who are eligible to return to college for the upcoming season.
- Only underclassmen who are **seriously** considering petitioning for special eligibility for the NFL 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 college.
- Players who are interested in obtaining an evaluation solely for insurance reasons.
- FOR INSURANCE INFORMATION, players should contact the NCAA's Exceptional Student-Athlete Disability Insurance Program at: <http://www.ncaa.org/>, or by 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 AN EVALUATION





# THE CAC EVALUATION

The evaluation will be based on the Committee's best estimate of the player's potential to be drafted. Again, the CAC's response is non-binding and does not constitute a guarantee that the player will be drafted.

**Players will be given 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; or

**(c)** they should remain in school to develop further as potential professional prospects while continuing their education.

The CAC's evaluation is based solely upon demonstrated football ability. It does not take into account injuries, the 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 has been completed, a member of the

CAC or a representative of the NFL Commissioner's office will contact each player and head coach by telephone. The player and head coach will also receive a written copy of the CAC's evaluation.

The evaluation is confidential. Only the player and his head coach will be notified of the result. The evaluation will not be provided to or discussed with agents, family members, media, or NFL clubs.

Each player is strongly encouraged to discuss the results of his evaluation as well as his decision regarding application for special eligibility with his college head coach.

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

- **Encourage players to COMPLETE their education and college football eligibility.** There are no guarantees that a player will be selected in the NFL Draft. Statistics indicate that the vast majority of student-athletes benefit by completing their eligibility.
- **Submit your evaluation requests EARLY.** Although evaluations are completed on a rolling basis, by submitting your school's requests in a timely manner you will ensure the earliest possible response from the CAC.

- **Submit all evaluation requests TOGETHER.** Submitting all of your school's evaluation requests together will expedite the evaluation process. Please do not forget to submit all required academic transcripts for your players.
- **Submit your GAME VIDEO.** Please confirm that the Dub Center at NFL Films has received all of your school's game films. Any delay in receiving game films may preclude the CAC's ability to evaluate your players prior to

the **January 15, 2018** deadline for special eligibility applications.

- **Verify 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.

# HOW COLLEGE HEAD COACHES CAN HELP





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.

It will change your life forever. Now, more than ever, make sure you know all the facts to make an informed decision.

The College Advisory Committee (CAC) is a service provided by the NFL to assist you in your decision. The CAC evaluates your football skills and advises you whether you have the potential to be drafted in the first or second round, OR if you should remain a student-athlete maturing as a potential professional prospect while continuing your education.

The CAC's football skill assessment is where NFL talent evaluators believe your skills measure up in comparison to the Draft class. You can share this information and discuss it with your parents, friends, advisors, coaches and teammates as you weigh your options.

We at the NFL cannot emphasize enough the value of completing your eligibility and degree. If, however, you are considering entering the NFL as an underclassman, you should do so with the best possible information to make that life-changing decision.

Use the resources available to you. Get evaluated by the CAC. Seek sound advice from those you trust. Know your facts. Make an informed decision.

God's Best,



Troy Vincent, Sr.  
Executive Vice President  
NFL Football Operations



FOOTBALL OPERATIONS

# MAKE THE **RIGHT** CHOICE/ KNOW THE FACTS

Entering the NFL Draft as an underclassman poses significant risks. **Before making any decisions, be sure that your player has all the facts.**

- There are no guarantees in the NFL Draft.
- If a player declares for the Draft but is not selected, he loses his remaining college eligibility.
- A player's draft position can improve significantly by continuing to play in college, maturing both physically and mentally, and receiving his college degree.



# WHY THE NFL WANTS ATHLETES TO STAY IN SCHOOL

The majority of underclassmen are not physically or mentally prepared to enter the NFL. Most would benefit significantly from another year of college football. An additional year of experience and competition at the college level may improve your player's position in the Draft and enable him to enjoy a longer, more successful NFL experience.

Even if they are drafted, underclassmen may have a more difficult time adjusting to the myriad of pressures of an NFL career: the rigors of training camp; mastering an NFL playbook; the struggle to make the roster; the increased expectations for on-field performance; the significantly elevated level

of competition and the length of the playing schedule. It takes a great deal of maturity, commitment and talent to thrive in the NFL environment.

If your student-athlete's goal is to play in the NFL, his best chance of enjoying a long and successful playing experience may be to complete his undergraduate education and his college football eligibility.

**OF THE 167 STUDENT-ATHLETES WHO RECEIVED CAC EVALUATIONS IN 2017, 59 DECLARED FOR THE DRAFT (35.3%):**

YEAR	TOTAL CAC PLAYERS EVALUATED	CAC PLAYERS DECLARED	% OF CAC PLAYERS DECLARED
2017	167	59	35.3%
2016	173	65	37.6%
2015	149	53	35.6%
2014	214	70	32.7%
2013	195	66	33.8%
2012	168	48	28.6%
TOTAL	1066	361	33.9%

**IN TOTAL, 27 PLAYERS WERE GIVEN FIRST-OR SECOND-ROUND EVALUATIONS BY THE 2017 CAC, 22 ENTERED THE 2017 NFL DRAFT, AND 20 WERE DRAFTED IN THE FIRST TWO ROUNDS.**

ROUND SELECTED	2017 PLAYERS SELECTED
1	11
2	9

**THE COLLEGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE IS EXTREMELY ACCURATE WHEN EVALUATING THE 1ST OR 2ND ROUND PROSPECTS WHO DECLARE FOR THE DRAFT:**

YEAR	CAC EVALUATION ACCURACY	
2017	90.9%	20/22 drafted in first two rounds
2016	76.0%	19/25
2015	90.0%	18/20
2014	90.9%	20/22
2013	85.7%	18/21
2012	82.4%	14/17
2011	93.3%	14/15
2010	72.2%	13/18
TOTAL	85.0%	136/160

Since 2010, 85.0% of student athletes who received a first- or second-round evaluation and declared for the Draft have been selected in the first two rounds.

**WHERE STUDENT ATHLETES ADVISED TO REMAIN IN SCHOOL ARE SELECTED**

In 2017, 140 total players were advised to remain in school by the College Advisory Committee (3rd-round grade or below). 40 of those 140 players declared for the 2017 NFL Draft after being advised to remain in school.

The average draft position of these players was consistent with the evaluations provided by the NFL clubs (4th-7th round).

ROUND SELECTED	2016 40 PLAYERS	2017 40 PLAYERS
1 <sup>ST</sup>	1	1
2 <sup>ND</sup>	4	2
3 <sup>RD</sup>	5	6
4 <sup>TH</sup>	2	6
5 <sup>TH</sup>	7	7
6 <sup>TH</sup>	1	4
7 <sup>TH</sup>	6	4
UNDRAFTED	14	10
AVG DRAFT ROUND	5.68	5.35

Of the 95 Underclassmen who declared for the 2017 NFL Draft, 28 went undrafted (29.5%). Only 10 of the 28 undrafted Underclassmen requested an assessment from the College Advisory Committee before declaring for the 2017 NFL Draft. All ten

undrafted Underclassmen who requested a CAC grade were advised to remain in school. Most, if not all, of these players had non-football-related issues that influenced their decision to declare.

67 of the 95 Underclassmen who declared for the 2017 NFL Draft were drafted (70.5%). 28 of the 67 drafted Underclassmen were advised to remain in school by the College Advisory Committee, and only three of these players were selected in the first two rounds (10.7%).

**SINCE 2015, 1<sup>ST</sup> AND 2<sup>ND</sup> ROUND EVALUATIONS HAVE HAD A DRAFTED ROUND AVERAGE OF 1.89; ONLY THREE PLAYERS HAVE BEEN DRAFTED LATER THAN THE THIRD ROUND.**

An NFL player's monetary success early in his career is often defined by his draft position, and the overall guaranteed money he can expect based on that draft position.

Players drafted in the first round can expect most, if not all, of their rookie contract to be fully guaranteed, with a

2017 average of around \$14.5 million per player. Second-round picks can expect most, if not all, of the first two years of their rookie contract to be fully guaranteed, and can expect to receive anywhere from \$3 million-\$4 million, guaranteed.

Players drafted outside of the first two rounds

can expect none of their Paragraph 5 salary to be guaranteed, with the only guaranteed money coming from signing bonus. These players cannot ensure long-term financial security with the money from their rookie contracts, and must depend on the slim chances of earning a second contract to do so.

DRAFT ROUND	2016 DRAFT GUARANTEED \$	2017 DRAFT GUARANTEED \$
1 <sup>ST</sup>	\$13,518,446	\$ 14,591,073
2 <sup>ND</sup>	\$ 3,024,333	\$ 3,257,789
3 <sup>RD</sup>	\$ 755,602	\$ 805,492
4 <sup>TH</sup>	\$ 524,372	\$ 581,458
5 <sup>TH</sup>	\$ 231,964	\$ 250,736
6 <sup>TH</sup>	\$ 124,830	\$ 145,497
7 <sup>TH</sup>	\$ 72,496	\$ 78,241

# A RISKY DECISION

In a typical year there are only 256 draft slots, including compensatory draft selections. Underclassmen may be drafted lower than expected, or not at all. The greater the number of players who enter the Draft, the greater the likelihood that a player may be selected in the later Draft rounds, or not drafted at all.



NFL FOOTBALL OPERATIONS

Bear in mind that the supply of potential middle-round players exceeds the demand.

Each year there are hundreds of players who fail to receive a phone call during the Draft informing them that they have been selected. Many of those undrafted college players will never have the opportunity to make an NFL team.

A "Bleacher Report" article 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, University of Tennessee

## 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, over the past 20 years the average playing careers by playing position are as follows:

- **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**

Although there are 53 spots on each NFL team's roster, only a limited number of those are spots open to competition each preseason. Last year, 1,184 players who were attempting to make rosters were cut before the NFL season even started. That's an average of 37 players per club. Undrafted free agents are even less likely to make an NFL roster.



# THE VALUE OF EDUCATION

Players who remain in college for their senior seasons often assume leadership roles on their teams, a quality that NFL teams value greatly when selecting players.

Having a college degree is also a significant asset. Chip Kelly, former NFL head coach 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 results from education, not from the uncertain prospect of an NFL career.

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 value of staying in school and continuing your education is 1) a degree that brings the opportunity for financial success for a lifetime; and 2) the possibility that your maturity will result in a higher draft selection and substantial financial gain.

The following players requested an evaluation from the College Advisory Committee but did not receive a first- or second-round evaluation. All of these players returned to school and were drafted in the first round the subsequent year, including six players in the 2016 Draft and three in 2017. These players dramatically improved their draft position by returning to school and continuing to develop personally and professionally.

PLAYER	POS	COLLEGE	CAC EVALUATION (YEAR)	DRAFT YEAR	OVR	CLUB
DAVIS, COREY	WR	WESTERN MICHIGAN	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('16)	2017	5	TEN
HOWARD, O.J.	TE	ALABAMA	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('16)	2017	19	TB
ENGRAM, EVAN	TE	MISSISSIPPI	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('16)	2017	23	NYG
RANKINS, SHELDON	DT	LOUISVILLE	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('15)	2016	12	NO
JOSEPH, KARL	DB	WEST VIRGINIA	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('15)	2016	14	OAK
DOCTSON, JOSH	WR	TEXAS CHRISTIAN	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('15)	2016	22	WAS
JACKSON, WILLIAM	DB	HOUSTON	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('15)	2016	24	CIN
BUTLER, VERNON	DT	LOUISIANA TECH	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('15)	2016	30	CAR
IFEDI, GERMAIN	T	TEXAS A&M	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('15)	2016	31	SEA
SHELTON, DANNY	DT	WASHINGTON	4 <sup>TH</sup> -7 <sup>TH</sup> ('14)	2015	12	CLV
DORSETT, PHILLIP	WR	MIAMI	4 <sup>TH</sup> -7 <sup>TH</sup> ('14)	2015	29	IND
JOHNSON, KEVIN	DB	WAKE FOREST	3 <sup>RD</sup> ('14)	2015	16	HST
DUPREE, BUD	LB	KENTUCKY	3 <sup>RD</sup> ('14)	2015	22	PIT
ANTHONY, STEPHONE	LB	CLEMSON	3 <sup>RD</sup> ('14)	2015	31	NO
MACK, KHALIL	LB	BUFFALO	4 <sup>TH</sup> -7 <sup>TH</sup> ('13)	2014	5	OAK
DONALD, AARON	DT	PITTSBURGH	4 <sup>TH</sup> -7 <sup>TH</sup> ('13)	2014	13	LA
FULLER, KYLE	DB	VIRGINIA TECH	4 <sup>TH</sup> -7 <sup>TH</sup> ('13)	2014	14	CHI
VERRETT, JASON	DB	TEXAS CHRISTIAN	4 <sup>TH</sup> -7 <sup>TH</sup> ('13)	2014	25	SD
GILBERT, JUSTIN	DB	OKLAHOMA STATE	3 <sup>RD</sup> ('13)	2014	8	CLV
JAMES, JA'WUAN	T	TENNESSEE	3 <sup>RD</sup> ('13)	2014	19	MIA
AUSTIN, TAVON	WR	WEST VIRGINIA	4 <sup>TH</sup> -7 <sup>TH</sup> ('12)	2013	8	SL
MANUEL, E.J.	QB	FLORIDA STATE	4 <sup>TH</sup> -7 <sup>TH</sup> ('12)	2013	16	BUF
JONES, DATONE	DE	UCLA	4 <sup>TH</sup> -7 <sup>TH</sup> ('12)	2013	26	GB



## THE MYTH OF “STARTING YOUR CLOCK”

Every year, some college players are persuaded to enter the NFL Draft by misguided advice or self-imposed pressure to “start their clocks” in the NFL. Presumably this is a reference to procuring successive NFL contracts of escalating rates of salary, as well as years of NFL service for pension and other benefits.

Of course, there is nothing wrong with that – people in other industries have the very same goals. However, in the NFL even those underclassmen who are in fact drafted must still make an NFL roster and play for at least three years to achieve those goals. Remember, if a prospect doesn’t make the team, his clock doesn’t start.

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

Entering the NFL Draft is a calculated risk and does not ensure a secure future. By remaining in college, a prospect improves his chances of achieving a longer and more sustainable NFL career. The higher a prospect is drafted, the more likely he is to receive a second or third NFL 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)

**2017-2018 COLLEGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**