



FOOTBALL
OPERATIONS



A HEAD COACH'S GUIDE

TO THE COLLEGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

2021-2022





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, second, or third 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.



**FOOTBALL
OPERATIONS**

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 are current Seniors or Redshirt-Seniors are not eligible to request a CAC grade.
- 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



**FOOTBALL
OPERATIONS**

REQUESTING AN EVALUATION

DATES & DEADLINES

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

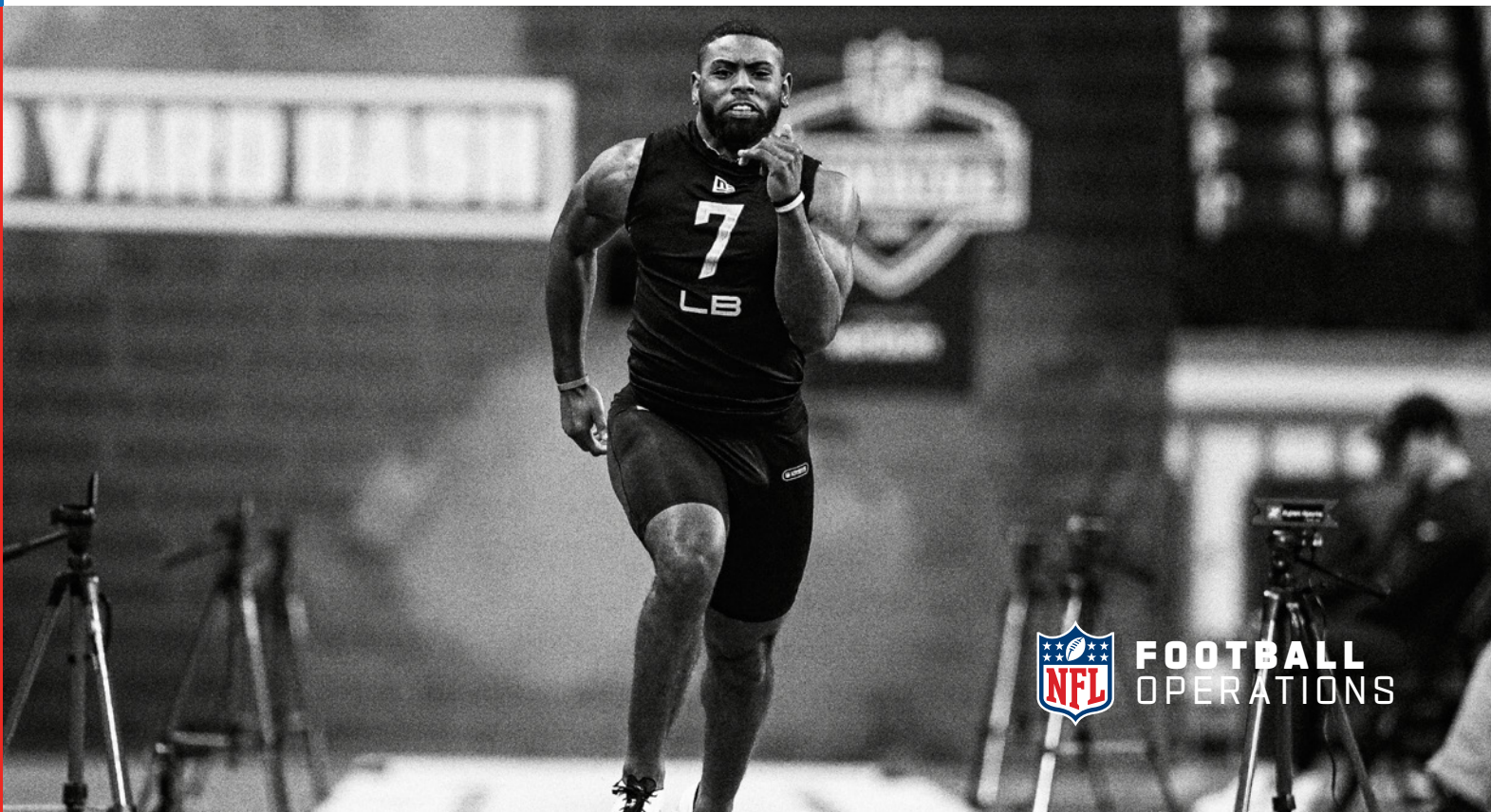
To ensure a timely evaluation, requests should be received no later than **Friday, December 17, 2021**. Although requests will be accepted until **Monday, January 3, 2022**, there is no guarantee that an evaluation can be completed and returned to the player prior to **Monday, January 17, 2022**, the 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.

Questions may be directed to the NFL Player Personnel Department at 212-450-2215 or nflplayerpersonnel@nfl.com.



FOOTBALL
OPERATIONS



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) you have the potential to be drafted as high as the first round;
- (b) you have the potential to be drafted as high as the second round; or
- (c) you have the potential to be drafted as high as the third round; however, the Committee recommends that you remain a student-athlete, maturing as a potential professional prospect while continuing your education.
- (d) you 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.



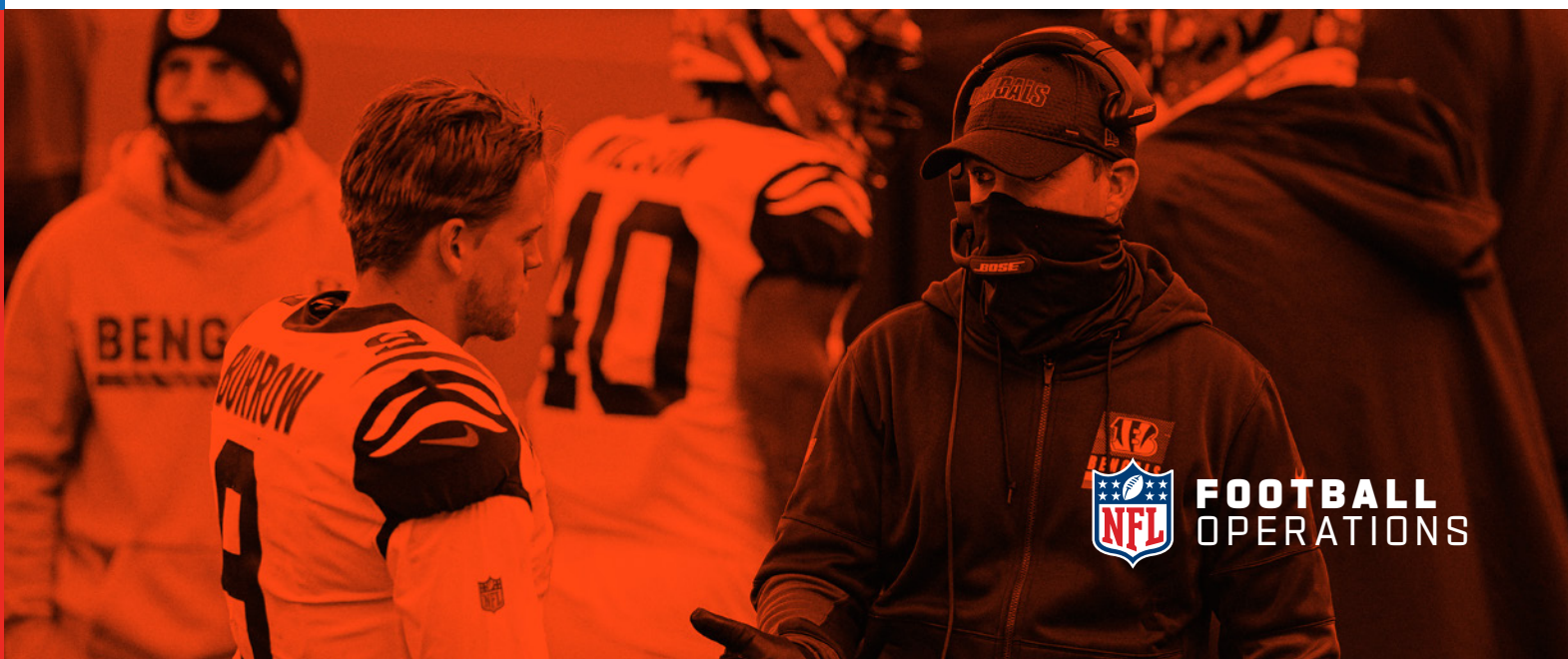
**FOOTBALL
OPERATIONS**

HOW COLLEGE HEAD COACHES CAN **HELP**

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 17, 2022** 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.



**FOOTBALL
OPERATIONS**



DEAR PROSPECT,

As an underclassman considering forfeiting your final year of eligibility as a college student-athlete, you are about to make one of the many important decisions in your sports experience.

The NFL College Advisory Committee (CAC) is a service to assist you with this 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 assessment provides a reference of where NFL talent evaluators place your skills compared with this 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 draft as an underclassman, equip yourself to make the best possible informed decision.

Discuss your options with your coach before making your decision, and utilize the resources your college makes available about becoming a professional athlete. Seek the counsel of your family and your current institution.

Make use the resources available to you as a student-athlete, such as the CAC evaluation. This guide assists you with answers to common questions, statistics, deadlines, and contact information to arrange for an evaluation. Consider all of your options carefully and make the right choice for you.

God's Best,



Troy Vincent, Sr.
Executive Vice President
NFL Football Operations



**FOOTBALL
OPERATIONS**



MAKE [REDACTED] 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.



**FOOTBALL
OPERATIONS**

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.



**FOOTBALL
OPERATIONS**

OF THE 194 STUDENT-ATHLETES WHO RECEIVED CAC EVALUATIONS IN 2021, 62 DECLARED FOR THE DRAFT (32%):

YEARS	TOTAL CAC PLAYERS	CAC PLAYERS DECLARED	% OF PLAYERS DECLARED
2021	194	62	32.0%
2020	217	78	35.9%
2019	252	92	36.5%
2018	247	83	33.6%
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%
TOTAL	1,808	628	34.7%

13 STUDENT-ATHLETES WERE GIVEN A 1ST OR 2ND ROUND EVALUATION. 11 OF THE 12 (91.6%) WHO DECLARED FOR THE DRAFT WERE DRAFTED IN THE FIRST TWO ROUNDS.

ROUND SELECTED	2021 11 PLAYERS SELECTED
1ST	6
2ND	5

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

YEAR	CAC EVALUATION ACCURACY	
2021	91.7%	11/12 DRAFTED IN FIRST TWO RDS
2020	96.0%	24/25
2019	84.2%	16/19
2018	76.2%	16/21
2017	90.9%	20/22
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
TOTAL	86.3%	176/204

Since 2012, 86.3% of student athletes who received a first or second-round evaluation and declared for the Draft have been selected in the first two rounds.



**FOOTBALL
OPERATIONS**

WHERE STUDENT ATHLETES ADVISED TO REMAIN IN SCHOOL ARE SELECTED

In 2021, 181 players were advised to remain in school by the College Advisory Committee (3rd-round grade or below). 50 of those 181 players declared for the 2021 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.

ROUND SELECTED	2020 73 PLAYERS SELECTED	2021 50 PLAYERS SELECTED
1 ST	3	4
2 ND	5	5
3 RD	9	10
4 TH	9	8
5 TH	5	7
6 TH	2	3
7 TH	5	2
UNDRAFTED	15	11
AVG DRAFT ROUND	5.05	4.62

Of the 98 Underclassmen plus an additional 30 graduates with remaining eligibility who declared for the 2021 NFL Draft, 28 went undrafted (21.88%). Only 11 of the 28 undrafted players requested an assessment from the College Advisory Committee before declaring for the 2021 NFL Draft.

All eleven undrafted players 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.

77 of the 98 Underclassmen without degrees who declared for the 2021 NFL Draft were drafted (78.6%). In other words, over 20 percent of the Underclassmen, who left school without degrees went undrafted. Only nine players who were advised to remain in school were selected in the first two rounds (18%).



**FOOTBALL
OPERATIONS**

SINCE 2017, 1ST AND 2ND ROUND EVALUATIONS HAVE HAD A DRAFTED ROUND AVERAGE OF 1.63; ONLY EIGHT 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 2021 average of around \$18.3 million per player. Second-round picks can expect most, if not all, 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.

ROUND SELECTED	2020 GUARANTEED	2021 GUARANTEED
1 ST	\$17,870,433	\$18,344,757
2 ND	\$4,154,470	\$4,336,642
3 RD	\$952,020	\$959,976
4 TH	\$680,744	\$692,377
5 TH	\$306,422	\$299,630
6 TH	\$170,893	\$164,032
7 TH	\$89,536	\$95,250



**FOOTBALL
OPERATIONS**

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.

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, 1,098 players who were attempting to make rosters were cut before the NFL season even started. That's an average of 34 players per club. Undrafted free agents are even less likely to make an NFL roster.



**FOOTBALL
OPERATIONS**



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.

One player that exudes leadership currently in the NFL is Chicago Bears linebacker Kahlil Mack.

Following his junior season at the University of Buffalo in 2013, Mack was advised by the NFL College Advisory Committee to remain in school.

“I couldn’t do that to my mom (who is a school teacher),” Mack told USA Today. **“Couldn’t leave school without a degree, couldn’t do that to her or myself.”** After completing his degree and finishing a stellar senior season on the field, he became the 5th overall pick in the 2014 Draft.

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.

Quarterback Cardale Jones, who led the Ohio State Buckeyes to a national championship in 2015, doesn’t regret his decision to stay in school. But he didn’t always feel that way, once tweeting in his redshirt freshman year, **“Why should we have to go to class if we came here to play FOOTBALL, we ain’t come to play SCHOOL, classes are POINTLESS.”**

By the time Jones was a rising senior, he was viewed as a potential first-round pick in the 2015 NFL draft, but he chose to return to school. At a news conference to announce his future, Jones said **“I feel like it’s best for me to go back to school. One of the most important things for me to do is graduate.”** Jones, who’s NFL career lasted just over 3 seasons, only throwing 11 passes, still believes graduating was his best decision because the benefits of an education lasts well beyond an athletes playing years.



**FOOTBALL
OPERATIONS**

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 two players in the 2020 Draft and seven in the 2021 Draft. These players dramatically improved their draft position by returning to school and continuing to develop personally and professionally. Please visit the following link to hear from some of these players about their decision to return to school:

<https://apps.nfl.net/collegeadvisorycommittee/>

PLAYER	POS	COLLEGE	CAC EVALUATION (YEAR)	DRAFT YEAR	OVR	CLUB
DEVONTA SMITH	WR	ALABAMA	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('20)	2021	10	PHI
RASHAWN SLATER	T	NORTHWESTERN	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('20)	2021	13	LAC
ALIJAH VERA-TUCKER	G	SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('20)	2021	14	NYJ
ALEX LEATHERWOOD	T	ALABAMA	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('20)	2021	17	LV
KWITY PAYE	DE	MICHIGAN	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('20)	2021	21	IND
NAJEE HARRIS	RB	ALABAMA	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('20)	2021	24	PIT
ERIC STOKES	DB	GEORGIA	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('20)	2021	29	GB
ISAIAH SIMMONS	LB	CLEMSON	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('19)	2020	8	AZ
JORDYN BROOKS	LB	TEXAS TECH	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('19)	2020	27	SEA
JOSH ALLEN	DE	KENTUCKY	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('18)	2019	7	JAX
JERRY TILLERY	DT	NOTRE DAME	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('18)	2019	28	LAC
DEANDRE BAKER	DB	GEORGIA	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('18)	2019	30	NYG
KALEN MCGARY	T	WASHINGTON	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('18)	2019	31	ATL
BAKER MAYFIELD	QB	OKLAHOMA	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('17)	2018	1	CLE
JOSH ALLEN	QB	WYOMING	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('17)	2018	7	BUF
FRANK RAGNOW	C	ARKANSAS	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('17)	2018	20	DET
BILLY PRICE	C	OHIO STATE	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('17)	2018	21	CIN
HAYDEN HURST	TE	SOUTH CAROLINA	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('17)	2018	25	BLT
RASHAAD PENNY	RB	SAN DIEGO STATE	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('17)	2018	27	SEA
SONY MICHEL	RB	GEORGIA	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('17)	2018	31	NE
COREY DAVIS	WR	WESTERN MICHIGAN	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('16)	2017	5	TEN
O.J. HOWARD	TE	ALABAMA	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('16)	2017	19	TB
EVAN ENGRAM	TE	MISSISSIPPI	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('16)	2017	23	NYG
SHELDON RANKINS	DT	LOUISVILLE	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('16)	2017	12	NO
KARL JOSEPH	DB	WEST VIRGINIA	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('15)	2016	14	OAK
JOSH DOCTSON	WR	TEXAS CHRISTIAN	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('15)	2016	22	WAS
WILLIAM JACKSON	DB	HOUSTON	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('15)	2016	24	CIN
VERNON BUTLER	DT	LOUISIANA TECH	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('15)	2016	30	CAR
GERMAIN IFEDI	T	TEXAS A&M	REMAIN IN SCHOOL ('15)	2016	31	SEA



**FOOTBALL
OPERATIONS**

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