

California State University, Sacramento Cheer Team Policy Statement

Introduction

This statement is intended to inform cheerleaders (parents, relatives, other interested parties and prospective cheerleaders) of various policies (e.g., travel, appearances, alcoholic beverages, drugs/drug testing, and nutrition) of the CSUS cheerleading program. In all policy and program matters, members of the cheer squad shall first be good, law-abiding citizens of the nation, state, and city, and secondly, shall be exemplary representatives of CSUS. These policies are as follows:

I. PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES

The CSUS cheerleading program is a student activity. As a student activity, its first and foremost responsibility to the student is to support and not to compromise the student's academic career. Secondly, the program should aid in developing the student participant into a responsible, mature and independent adult. Specifically, 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 decision; (3) will enhance the ability to respond to life's situations, e.g., conflict/frustration, control of anger and heat, win/loss, react without too much emotion; (4) will contribute to social development of interpersonal relationships; and (5) generally will maximize the opportunity for student growth, change and maturity.

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 CSUS. That support is directed into three major areas, as follows: (1) to lead the 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 CSUS fans and to project that support to the University and its teams; (2) to participate in the athletic activity known as cheerleaders by performing gymnastics, partner stunts, motions, pyramids, dance movements; to perfect this athletic activity for keeping the crowds 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 relation ambassadors of intercollegiate athletics and CSUS, 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 (not commercial/business purposes) to promote intercollegiate athletics and the University.

II Organization Structure

The University's cheer program has two squads a Coed Squad and an All Girl Squad. The coed team cheers for Football, and Men's Basketball. The All Girl Team cheers at some Football games, Volleyball and Women's Volleyball. 16 squad members make up the squad which competes for the National Championship on the Coed team; however, all members of the squad are eligible to compete, depending on academic standing, athletic ability, and proven

performance. All members of the all-girl team are eligible to compete based upon academic standing, athletic ability and proven performance.

Generally, at least fourteen members of the squads are chosen at the Spring tryouts, and the coach/advisor will add alternate members. Cheerleading at CSUS is a student activity and subsequently is a part of the Associated Students and Athletics. The cheer coach/advisor reports to the athletic director, director of ASI and the director of sports and marketing. The cheer program is budgeted in Athletics and ASI and performs primarily at events of the Athletic association. Then there is an additional reporting relationship to Athletics and Sports & Marketing.

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 each year. Cheerleaders do not make business or commercial appearances (as cheerleaders). Cheerleaders who appear at business or commercial events as individuals, not as CSUS cheerleaders, are required to notify and seek approval of the advisor.

All appearances by the cheerleaders shall be approved in advance by the cheerleader advisor. Appearances shall be at places and events, which are considered in good taste. The cheerleaders shall appear only at events/activities, which will reflect positively on them as individuals, and as representatives of the Athletics Association and the University.

With due consideration to the size of the event, priority for appearances shall be in the following order: CSUS Athletic Association events/activities, CSUS Alumni Association and other CSUS events and activities, and public relations events/activities. Cheerleaders shall not make appearances at political event activities. In committing to an appearance for the cheerleaders, the advisor/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.

Alcoholic Beverages

As stated earlier, cheerleaders are expected, first, to be good, law-abiding citizens of the nation, state, and city. This expectation is foremost when it comes to alcoholic beverages. Cheerleaders are reminded that, as highly visible members of the University community, their actions and behavior are under constant observation. Absolutely while in uniform, but also while not in uniform, CSUS 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 of the campus to away games or other official functions, it is strongly suggested that cheerleaders (who are 21 or over) neither consume nor possess alcoholic beverages. In most cases the CSUS cheerleaders will be under the age of 21, the legal age to consume alcoholic beverages in virtually all states.

Reality is that, as college students who appear and travel across the state and nation as public relations persons for the University, members of the squad will be exposed to the use of alcoholic beverages. Although attempts will be made to avoid functions where alcoholic beverages are being served, undoubtedly, the cheerleaders will attend some function or activity where alcoholic beverages are present. If a cheerleader has a particular objection to attending an event where alcoholic beverages are present or find alcohol beverages particularly offensive, he/she should make that fact known to the cheerleading coach/advisor immediately. Similarly, parents of cheerleaders are encouraged to do the same. The advisor will make every effort to arrange for the cheerleader to be excused from that event/activity. In any case where it is practical and feasible, an alternative form of entertainment will be offered to cheerleader(s) who do not want to be where alcoholic beverages are being served. If a cheerleader finds him/herself in an uncomfortable situation for any reason, but especially because of alcoholic beverages, he/she should inform the coach/advisor as soon as possible.

Members of the squad shall adhere to the following rules:

- *Cheerleaders shall not possess or drink alcoholic beverages in a University car, van or bus;
 - *Cheerleaders shall not consume alcoholic beverages before or during a game or a practice; and
 - *Cheerleaders shall not offer to procure for or attempt to coerce cheerleaders who are under 21 or who do not want to drink alcoholic beverages into doing the same.
- 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 be good citizens and, therefore, carefully and faithfully abide by University rules and regulations and the laws and ordinances of the city or state in which they live or travel.

Rules and Regulations

A. Tryouts

1. Anyone wishing to try out for cheerleading shall:
 - a. Attend clinics taught by the senior cheerleaders or someone appointed by the coach/advisor.
 - b. Maintain a 2.0 grade point average and
 - c. to tryout for the squad, you must show proof of application, acceptance or be a current student in good standing at CSUS.

2. For justifiable reason(s), the cheerleader advisor/coach can make an exception to rules A.1. a. b. or c above.
3. Only with special permission of the cheerleading advisor can one try out for the cheer team after he/she has left the squad on a previous occasion.
4. There will be additional members of the squad named after tryouts by the advisor and coach, with advice from the members of the squad. The coach/advisor, in selecting additional members of the squad will give consideration to the physical size, general composition of the squad, academic grade point standing, placement in tryouts, etc. Also, a "mike" person may be a member of the squad; the coach/advisor also assists in selecting this person. Other alternate members of the squad may be named by the coach/advisor in accordance with needs for additional members.
5. The CSUS cheerleading program is a highly competitive and time-consuming activity. Persons who have other serious commitments (other than academics) of their time, such as a child, a spouse, a 20 hour or more work week, etc., are strongly encouraged to discuss their commitment with the cheerleading advisor and coach before trying out for the squad. Similarly, persons in academic programs, which have significant time-consuming demands, e.g., architecture, physical therapy, etc., are encouraged to do the same.

General

1. Cheerleaders shall maintain a 2.0 grade point average, and be enrolled as a full-time student at CSUS. Full time status for undergraduates is 12 units or more and for graduate students is 6 units or more.
2. Male cheerleaders shall enroll in advanced weight training during the Fall semester and female cheerleaders on the Coed team shall enroll in a jogging or aerobic class for the Fall semester for 1 unit. Everyone will enroll in a 2 unit cheerleading class each semester.
3. Cheerleaders are eligible for priority registration as a member of the team. Cheerleaders must attend a mandatory workshop on academic priority registration, have at minimum of a 2.0 GPA, and follow any additional requirements the priority registration department deems necessary.
4. For justifiable reason(s), the advisor may make an exception to rules 1 & 2 above.
5. Cheerleaders shall not consume alcoholic beverages while in uniform, shall not go into any place where alcoholic beverages are served. Exceptions would be events such as an official appearance at CSUS athletics or CSUS Alumni Association events.
6. If funds are available and the squad attends a collegiate cheerleading camp, every member of the squad shall attend.

7. Each cheerleader shall have a complete physical by a physician or at the health center prior to attending the college cheerleading camp at the end of the summer if requested by the Coach/and or Advisor.
8. Cheerleaders are expected to work as a team. Individual members of the squad may be close friends. Squad members' friendships or non-friendships shall not have significant effect on the team.
9. 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 placement for loss or damage, excluding normal wear and tear.
10. Other rules concerning cheerleaders may be promulgated verbally or in written form by the advisor/coach. Violation of these additional rules may result in disciplinary action.
11. Violations of any cheerleading rules shall subject the squad member to discipline. The advisor with consultation and advice of the coach sometimes levies final discipline. In most cases, captain(s) (if chosen that year) will be advised/consulted with in relation to a squad member's discipline.
12. A serious violation of these rules or repeated violations shall result in one's being suspended from the squad. Less serious violations shall result in one's loss of opportunity to travel to away games or being entitled to complimentary tickets for games. A squad member may be suspended from cheering one or more games due to violations of these rules.
13. These rules and regulations are subject to addition and change when found necessary and beneficial. The coach/advisor makes final acceptance of all rules.

Practices

The cheerleaders shall:

Attend all practices (regular practices are scheduled on Sunday, Tuesday and Thursdays, for Coed and Sunday, Monday & Wednesday for All-Girl, special practices will be scheduled as needed)

*Not be tardy or absent from practice

*Notify coach/advisor or captain(s) as soon as possible if he/she finds it impossible to attend practice or knows he/she is going to be tardy and

*Not consume alcoholic beverages before a practice

Games

Cheerleaders shall:

- *Attend all home football, home volleyball and men's and women's basketball games as scheduled, required scrimmages, and/or special scheduled games or activities.
- *Arrive at the game site at the scheduled time, unless the advisor/coach or captains designate an earlier or later time and
- *Not consume alcoholic beverages before a game.

A captain or captains may be selected by a vote of the entire squad and/or the approval and recommendation by the coach/advisor.

Travel

1. Travel to away games will be in accordance with budget restrictions and in accordance with the WAC conference and the University rules and regulations.
2. The squad or a portion thereof, 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 gives up his/her privilege to cheer at the game, except in special cases, which will be determined by the advisor/coach..
3. Final authority of all decisions made while traveling shall rest with the advisor/coach; decisions may be made with the advice and consent of the captains and majority.
4. An itinerary will usually be prepared and given to each cheerleader traveling. The itinerary will include times of departure, arrival, etc., telephone number(s) of hotel(s), appropriate articles of clothing, etc. Squad members shall adhere to the itinerary.
5. When only a specific number of cheerleaders are attending an away game, final authority on who goes rests with the advisor/coach. Consideration as to the selection shall be as follows; (1) determination of who wants to go; (2) fairly even distribution of trips for each squad member; (3) attendance records at practices, games, special events with due consideration to tardiness; (4) input from the squad (vote as to whom the squad thinks would be best to go). Other methods of selection, which could be used, are (1) drawing (2) seniority (3) class or (4) grade point average.

Injuries/Illnesses

Any illness or injury shall be reported to the advisor/coach immediately.

Any injury suffered during practices, games or other official functions will need to be treated by your personal insurance carrier or doctor.

If an injury or illness incapacitates a squad member, he/she shall not be permitted to practice or cheer for a period of time as determined by the squad members doctor. 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 the squad members physician.

If a squad member 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, the squad member may be removed from the squad by the advisor/coach.

Health, Lifestyle and Nutrition

Introduction

The CSUS cheerleading program is committed to promoting and fostering healthy lifestyles and eating habits 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 is violation of this policy and will result in appropriate counseling and/or disciplinary action up to and including termination from the squad.

Cheerleaders at CSUS must be excellent athletes. Cheerleading involves some aspects of several athletic activities, e.g., rotation and tumbling of gymnastics, stamina of basketball, strength of body building or football, balance and movement of dance, etc.

The primary activity of the CSUS cheerleaders is the partner stunt (double stunt). Pyramids are partner stunts combined vertically (in levels, not to exceed two-and-a-half human heights) and horizontally (side-by-side partner stunt). The nature of these activities demands certain general physical requirements of the CSUS cheerleader. The male squad member must have sufficient strength to base pyramids and to lift, hold, throw and catch females safely. Female squad members must be of appropriate size and weight such that they can be lifted, held, thrown and caught safely. For safety and performance reasons, females generally should be under a height of five foot six inches and under a weight of one hundred twenty pounds. Body composition varies from individual to individual, but these measurements are thought to be ideal in relation to safety. It is thought that the risk of injury rises substantially with the female who is over five foot seven and/or over one hundred twenty pounds. In addition, persons of less than average size, particularly females, are more likely to demonstrate the flexibility (quick change of direction, flight in basket-tosses, etc.) which is necessary in the athletic aspects of cheerleading.

Education

Education is the key to promotion of healthy lifestyles and preventing eating disorders. CSUS cheerleading advisors, coaches and squad members will on occasion receive written materials and oral instruction on healthy eating.

The education unit of the CSUS cheer program on promoting healthy lifestyles and preventing eating disorders will annually include at least one of the following:

1. Distribution for reading the materials: "Nutrition for Cheerleaders," by Kathy Engelhart-Fenton, Directory or the University of Utah Nutrition Center;
2. A lecture/meeting with a nutritionist as arranged by the coach/advisor.
3. Teaching of advisors & coaches to recognize eating disorders, to know what treatment options are available and to be familiar with CSUS and procedures for handling eating disorders;
4. Annual lecture for female members of the program by a physician who specializes in gynecology or someone arranged by the coach/advisor.

Program Requirements

Body composition tests will be administered at least once each year, with more tests being run when the advisor/coach judges necessary.

Ms Engelhart-Fenton states that the average female cheerleader should have a body fat percentage of 12 - 14% with a 3% leeway, CSUS female squad members' body fat should be in the 9 - 17% range. For the CSUS male cheerleader, the body fat percentage should be 7- 10%. With a variation of 3%, CSUS males' body fat should be in the 4 - 13% range.

When a weight gain or loss becomes apparent to the advisor/coach, and when this weight gain or loss is reasonably believed to be a detriment to safety, the advisor/coach will develop a plan to assist the affected squad member.

Generally, squad members who are below their usual weight will be referred to a nutritionist, or the CSUS student health center service for appropriate counseling. Generally, squad members who gain weight to the detriment of safety will be referred to a nutritionist and will be allocated a reasonable time (in accordance with amount of weight gain) to reduce their weight. Persons who constantly fluctuate weight and/or who consistently have weight loss/gain to the detriment of safety shall be removed from the squad.

Procedures

Squad members who acknowledge an eating disorder problem shall be suspended from performance (games and practices) and immediately referred to the CSUS health center who will follow CSUS training procedures for seeking medical (physical and psychological) services for the squad member. Upon the recommendation of a physician and with the concurrence of the advisor and coach the squad member may be returned to performance. In accordance with the severity of the problem, the advisor/coach may seek the physician's continued approval for the squad member to perform (play and practice). A squad member whose eating disorder problem presents sufficient documented disruption to squad practice, travel and performance may be suspended or terminated from the program.

Having been educated as to the symptoms of eating disorders, it is the responsibility of squad members, coaches, trainers, choreographers, and advisors to attempt to recognize a problem with a squad member. If the advisor/coach has sufficient documented evidence to reasonably believe that a squad member has an eating disorder problem, the advisor/coach will confront that squad member. Admission of a problem will result in the previously detailed procedures. Without admission and after the advisor's/coaches presentation of evidence, the squad member shall, depending on the weight of the evidence, be 1) encouraged to seek counseling or 2) required to go to the CSUS Health Center for a referral to an appropriate physician.

Because of the nature of the cheerleading activity (partner stunt and pyramids), each squad member's health and fitness is significant. Unlike most sports, the collapse of a squad member, due to health or injury problems could potentially lead to the serious injury of other squad members, not just the one member who is sick (or injured). While the advisor/coach will demonstrate a compassionate understanding for sickness (and injury) problems will be dealt with fairly, but firmly. When any possibility of danger to other squad members is reasonably foreseeable due to the health of another squad member, the unhealthy squad member shall be suspended or terminated from the program.

Policy conclusion

The most important part of this policy is the goal of teaching squad members nutritious eating habits. Dieting as a method of weight loss is strongly discouraged. "Crash" diets will not be tolerated, and persons engaging in such conduct will be subject to disciplinary action. General nutritional counseling is an ongoing part of this program. Every effort will be made to have nutritional foods available for the squad on away trips.

Squad members must realize that they are what they eat and drink. Squad members will be informed on nutritional eating. The ultimate responsibility for weight maintenance rests with the squad member him or herself.

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 heights; participation in cheerleading involves a certain amount of danger of personal injury. Cheerleaders are placed on notice that improper conduct of cheerleading activities 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 CSUS program has adopted 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.

Copies of the AACCA guidelines are readily available. If a squad member does not have a copy, and would like to read one, they should request a copy from the advisor/coach.

The American Association for Cheerleading Coaches and Advisors (AACCA) publication, CHEERLEADING SAFETY MANUAL, is required reading for the cheerleading advisor/coach, and captain(s). A Copy of the MANUAL is available per the coach/advisor. Cheerleaders are encouraged to check it out and read it carefully.

Please sign and date that you have read the above policy and procedures and agree to abide by them as long as you are a member of the CSUS cheer team.

X
Signature

Date