

Personal Coaching Tenets

Develop a student-athlete centered program.

Focus on building relationships.

Promote the importance of academics at all times.

Outwork all of our opponents.

Develop fundamentally-sound players.

Emphasize efficient biomechanical movement patterns in everything our athletes do.

Run a year-round program at a championship level.

Organize practices that are efficient, competitive, and conducive to learning and improvement.

Create an environment where athletes and coaches are encouraged to learn on a continuous basis.

Provide our athletes with the tools and educational resources to be successful in all aspects of their life.

Promote and reinforce our program core values and standards through positive role modeling.

Mentor and develop our coaches.

Consistently evaluate the way we do everything.

Be involved and engaged in university and community events.

Have fun!

Academic Progress

Softball Academic Progress Plan

We must consistently promote the importance of academics at all times. The goal of our program is to have 100% graduation rate among our players and have them graduate with meaningful degrees that will help them be successful in the future.

The following will be expected of our softball players.

100% Class attendance: Contact your instructor in advance if there is a problem.

Missed Class: If players are going to miss class because of a game, they must let their instructor know in advance so they can reschedule any tests or quizzes. Players must not wait until the last minute. Practice is not an excuse to miss any class or class-related activities.

In Class: Players must be attentive, respectful and participate in all of their classes.

Study Hall: If you are required to attend study hall, be prompt and prepared with work.

If you are having difficulties with a class, see your instructor, advisor, or your head coach as soon as possible. Students will be expected to use the on-campus resources.

All freshman must report for 8 hours of study table each week. 6 of these hours must be supervised by a member of the academic staff for athletes.

Study table attendance logs are checked each week by the coaching staff.

All freshman must complete self-reported progress reports each Friday to gauge their current academic standing.

Academic progress report #1 is completed for each class prior to midterms of each semester. We use these reports and the midterm GPA to identify student-athletes who are struggling. For those students who are identified, we set up weekly informal meetings with the student-athlete to discuss their classes and progress. Any student-athlete, regardless of grade, who has a D or F in a class, or below a 2.0 gpa, is required to go to the academic resource center for some of their study table hours.

Academic progress report #2 is completed 2 weeks prior to finals for those student-athletes who were identified as "at-risk" on report #1. Any student who has a D or F in a class is required to visit the academic resource center for finals preparation.

Any sophomore, junior, or senior who has below a 2.75 gpa at the end of any semester is required to complete the following:
8 hours of study table

4 on their own

4 mandatory supervised

Weekly Progress Reports

Any student-athlete who has below a 2.0 gpa at the end of any semester is required to complete the following:

10 hours of study table per week:

2 hours at the academic resource center

4 hours on their own

4 hours mandatory supervised

Weekly Progress Reports

An academic planner must be presented at mandatory study tables

Have professors complete a grade check every 2 weeks.

Academic Responsibilities of Coaches

- Promote academics over athletics in all situations.
- Teach proper time management skills.
- Maintain constant communication with faculty.
- Praise and reward academic achievements.
- Monitor athlete's grades and classroom behavior throughout the year.
- Facilitate tutoring/study sessions for student-athletes when traveling.
- Thoroughly understand any special academic needs of student-athletes.
- Open the line of communication between coaching staff and faculty by introducing ourselves to the faculty. We will also encourage the faculty to communicate with us in regards to any of our student-athletes.

Developing a Positive Culture

PROGRAM CORE VALUES

Accountability

- The willingness to take responsibility for one's own actions.

Service

- A person who lives their life with a spirit of service becomes a selfless teammate, which becomes a building block for a championship team. The best team leaders are the first to serve, putting others before themselves. These players are the ones who are the first to volunteer to help. They are never too proud to do work, even if it's difficult. They will do the dirty work in order for the team to succeed. These jobs are often done without anyone knowing because there is no complaining.

Teamwork/Unity

- Everyone involved in the program is a valued member, treated with respect, encouraged to contribute and recognized and rewarded for his/her efforts.

Integrity

- Integrity is a choice of behaviors displayed in small daily decisions. It is a consistency in our actions and a failure to compromise our values. Always do the right thing. Do your best. Treat others as you want to be treated.

Positive Attitude

- Maintain an optimistic outlook by turning challenges into opportunities. We are motivated, driven, and passionate for success. We find the positive in every situation and have fun as a team.

Honesty

- Telling the truth and backing it up with actions. Show respect for what's right and an esteem for ethical and moral integrity.

Leadership

- Motivating teammates by connecting program goals to each player's personal values and strengths.

Work Ethic

- Hard work and diligence have a moral benefit and an inherent ability to strengthen character and individual abilities.

Pride

- A sense of satisfaction derived from one's own work and achievements, and the work and achievements of others.

Commitment /Loyalty

- Devotion to each other, the program, and the university.

Preparation

- Doing the things that lead to success.

Excellence

- A discipline and a means for making the program and university better.

Respect

- Support everyone's worth and dignity, regardless of background, abilities, or beliefs.

Growth/Development

- Taking every opportunity to better ourselves as people, athletes, and coaches.

Consistency

- Doing the regular things exceptionally well.

Competitive

- Compete every day in everything you do.

Developing a Positive Culture

PROGRAM STANDARDS

On the Field:

Respect the game.
Show great sportsmanship.
Never argue with an official.
Refrain from drawing negative attention to yourself.
Do not show up your opponents.
Keep your composure at all times.

At practice:

Dress in team issued apparel. Everybody dresses the same.
Unless you have class or are excused ahead of time, you should be ready to practice at designated time. If you are going to be late you need to let a coach know before practice, do not rely on someone else to relay the message.
Make sure you are helping with set up & tear down of practice. Make sure that all equipment needed for practice is out and ready.
Practice like you are going to play: dive, slide, talk, & be intense.
No less than 100% - practice time is SOFTBALL time!
Communication is key – talk to your teammates.
Be coachable.
Do not give up on a drill.
Always hustle, do not walk on the field or in between drills.
Leave all outside distractions in the locker room.
Be positive and uplifting to teammates.
Compete in everything we do.

In the Classroom:

Be a positive contributor to the classroom environment.
Sit at or near the front of the classroom.
Set a positive example for your peers.
Interact with your teachers frequently.
Class attendance is expected. Contact your professor in advance if there is a problem.
If you are having difficulties with a class, see your instructor, advisor, or your head coach as soon as possible.
If you are going to miss a class because of a game, remind your professor a couple of days in advance. If you are going to miss a quiz or test because of a game, let your professor know in advance so that it can be rescheduled.
Practice is not an excuse to miss any class or class-related activities. You can make up your missed practice time on your own— see the head coach. Do not skip classes, group projects, or study sessions for practice.

In the Community:

Refrain from inappropriate language and behavior.
Be on time everywhere you go.
Always represent the program, the university, and yourself in a positive manner.

Respect the history of the program:

Every member of the program should have high expectations for themselves and the team. The tradition that you are being asked to uphold here is the same tradition that your predecessors have worked so hard to create. Respect what others who have come before you have built and continue the tradition by leaving a positive legacy.

Personal Responsibility:

Accept personal responsibility for all of your actions and behaviors. Do not place blame on others or settle for making excuses.

Facilities:

Keep the locker room as clean as possible.
Pick up any trash in locker room, the field, or any facility we use. This pertains to the facilities that we visit as well.

Developing a Positive Culture

PROGRAM STANDARDS

Equipment Care:

The equipment that is issued to you is your responsibility. It is essential that you take excellent care of your equipment through proper cleaning and security. You are responsible for it and will be required to pay for it if it is lost, stolen, or damaged. Never wear the gear for anything except for the event for which it is intended. Being well dressed for practices and games is part of the pride we want to carry as a program.

Respect the belongings of your teammates.

Timeliness:

Be on time or earlier for all softball functions. We will have itineraries for all practices, games, and travel. If you will be late, it is your responsibility to let a coach know as early as possible.

Your participation in all team functions, including meetings, practices, conditioning sessions, and games is expected unless previously excused by a coach. Do not tell someone else to cover for you. Take care of any training room issues BEFORE practices and workouts—do not use this as an excuse for being late. If you do not have time to visit the training room between classes and practice/workouts, please advise the coaching staff ahead of time.

Travel:

Make sure your assigned equipment is loaded prior to leaving campus and prior to leaving opponents facility. Do not rely on someone else to take care of your responsibility.

Always represent the program, the university, and yourself in a positive manner.

General:

Refrain from inappropriate language.

Absolutely no hazing of any kind. If there is any question, don't do it.

Be respectful of others when they are talking.

Positive body language and positive self-talk.

Alcohol and Drug Use:

All policies outlined in the athletic department code of conduct will be followed.

Social Media:

Keep all social media posts, whether private or public, appropriate at all times.

Developing a Positive Culture

Gaining Buy-In and Alignment

With any successful program, you quickly discover a specific culture that pervades. A culture is defined as a set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes an organization.

Successful teams focus not on winning championships and outcomes, but instead on the process of building a strong culture that will ultimately create peak performance on a consistent basis. Individually, athletes on such teams must be accountable for demonstrating certain values and standards. These values and standards ultimately create the program's culture.

I am deeply passionate about developing a program that is athlete-centered and based upon building positive relationships. In order for our athletes to hold each other accountable, they must have positive role models who exhibit accountability themselves. With this in mind, here are some thoughts for developing buy-in from the athletes, and alignment throughout the program.

Mentor and develop the staff.

Mentor and develop the current players. Further develop those that display positive leadership characteristics.

Recruit players who display a commitment to the program's core values and standards.

Communicate the program's purpose/culture with clarity and consistency.

Hold **everyone** within the program accountable – deal with issues quickly and firmly.

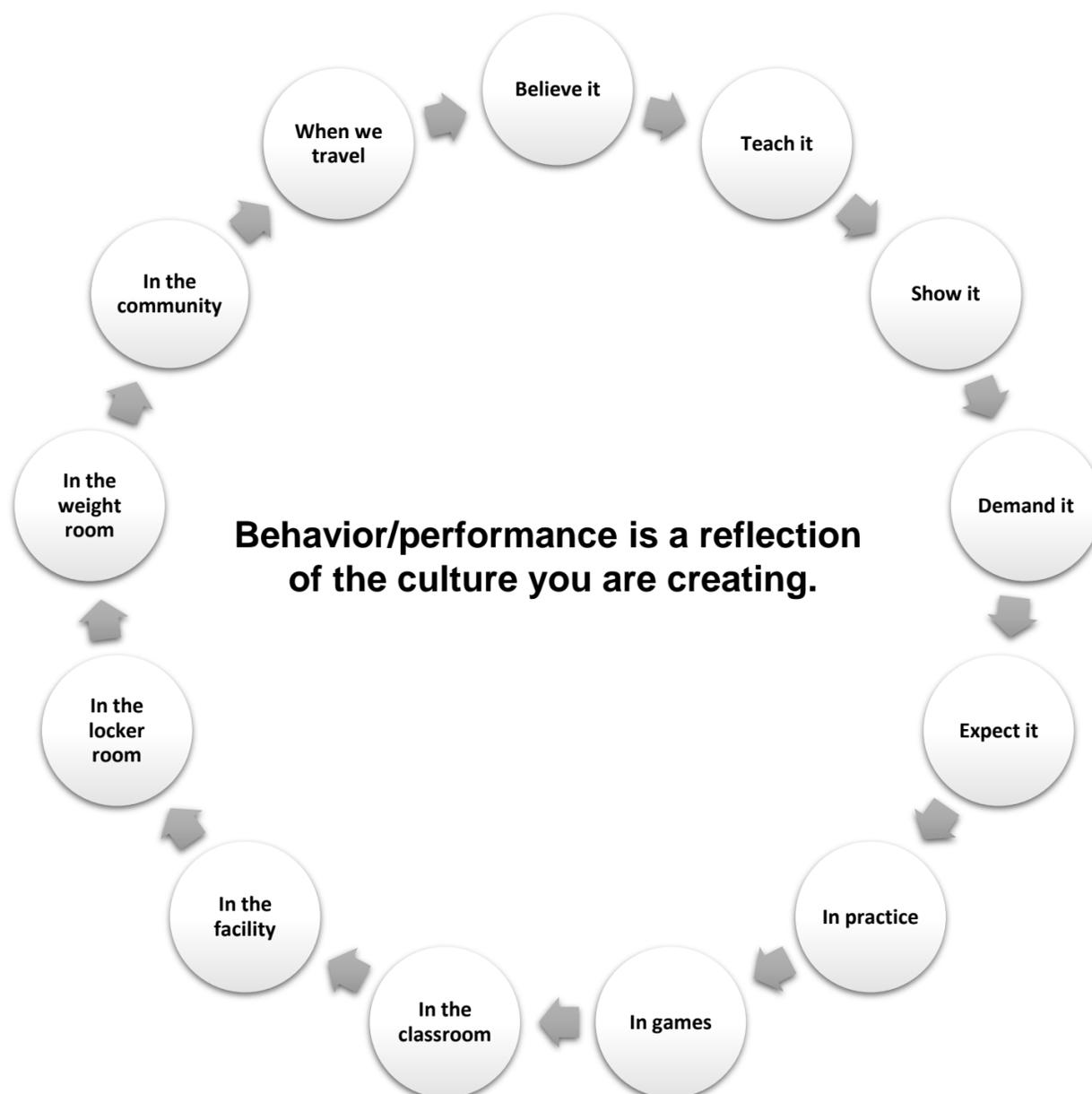
Define and communicate everyone's role within the program.

Provide ample opportunity for everyone to demonstrate their strengths and contributions to the program.

Allow for input from everyone within the program on the core values, standards, and expectations.

Develop personal relationships beyond the sport. Value everyone as a person – connect and care.

Provide positive examples of what is expected – back up words with actions. What does this look like?



Program Goals

 <p>Academic success – 100% graduation rate, improve academic performance (team GPA >3.0).</p>	 <p>Promote mental, emotional, intellectual, social, and spiritual growth of the student-athlete.</p>	 <p>Increase team involvement in community and university-related affairs and events.</p>
 <p>Keep athletes healthy and injury free.</p>	 <p>Emphasis on strength & conditioning program.</p>	 <p>Emphasis on overall player improvement and development.</p>
 <p>Increase winning percentage every year.</p>	 <p>Qualify for and win conference tournament.</p>	 <p>Improvements in fundraising efforts.</p>
 <p>Maintain and improve playing field and softball facilities.</p>	 <p>Improvement in recruiting success:</p>	 <p>HAVE FUN!!</p>

KEYS TO SUCCESS:

Extra effort on and off the field by all involved with the program.

Strong recruiting effort by all involved in the program.

100% class attendance.

Represent the individual, the team, the program, and the university in a professional and classy manner, both on and off the field.

Increase softball knowledge.

Prepare for opponents through detailed scouting reports.

Get involved in university and community affairs.

Softball during softball time.

Commitment and strong effort in the weight room.

Take care of yourself: eat healthy, rest, treatments, study.

Ask yourself every day, "What have I learned and what have I done to improve myself and the team."

Set personal and team goals, and have a plan to ensure that those goals become realities.

Build strong relationships with each player.

Efficient and organized practices.

Emphasize extra work outside of practice.

Build relationships with area coaches (youth, HS, travel).

Program & Staff Development

The coaching staff is an important part of the softball program. Members of the coaching staff will contribute their knowledge and skills in helping develop the players, as well as aiding the head coach in building a championship-caliber softball program. It is imperative that the coaching staff has passion for coaching. If a coach isn't passionate about what they do, they will not reach their full potential. The staff must also be loyal, not only to the head coach, but the team and the university. They must be open-minded, professional, enthusiastic, and have integrity. From a program perspective, we must continually look for ways to build and support the program at the foundational level.

Improve academic performance.

Increase academic monitoring, especially for freshman.

Increase team involvement in community and university-related affairs and events.

Develop an outline of service activities per year.

Keep athletes healthy and injury free.

Increase monitoring of athletes who attend training room.

Develop a functional movement screening program to identify imbalances and improper biomechanics.

Encourage healthy habits such as proper nutrition, rest, and sleep.

Identify student-athletes who may be overly stressed.

Continued emphasis on strength & conditioning program.

Teach proper technique to freshman.

Utilize more power building exercises.

Add more variety to program and implement it into practices.

Emphasis on overall player improvement and development.

Focus on fundamentals while also incorporating new and more advanced concepts.

Meet recruiting goals established for each recruiting class

Increase assistant coach responsibilities.

Improve facility

Continually look for ways to make our facilities the best in the conference.

Improve team chemistry, develop mentorship program.

Weekly meetings about character building and leadership.

Build team pride around the locker room environment.

Technical Knowledge

Each and every coach must know and understand our instructional philosophies so that they are all teaching the same concepts to our players. Nothing can hinder player development more than being told multiple things by different coaches. The players must be coached with the same language and the same concepts in order to succeed on the field. Knowing the game and imparting knowledge to players is teaching. Good teaching is promoting our philosophy with enthusiasm and conviction.

Professional Development

Each coach has a responsibility to the program and their players to become the best coach possible. Learning different points of view and techniques to teach the players will improve the coaching ability of each coach, which will in turn improve the skill and knowledge of the players they coach. The better the coaches are within a program, the better the program is. A coach must be open minded, intelligent, creative and constantly seeking to improve their knowledge of the game.

Organization and Attention to Detail

The coaching staff must model the hard work and dedication to the program that they demand of the players. Coaches must be on time for all meetings, complete all tasks in the appropriate amount of time, and work above and beyond the time spent in practices and meetings with the players. With a true commitment to excellence, each coach must be internally motivated, highly organized, and dedicated to getting the job done regardless of how hard or long the task might be. ***We will not be outworked by anyone on our schedule!***

Building Relationships

Developing relationships with our players beyond softball is imperative. We must show them that we genuinely care about them and their personal growth and development. The players have to trust us and know that we are there to support them in their journey toward becoming good people. We must have genuine care and concern for the young people we are responsible for. To work closely with young people in developing worthy values and attitudes, coaches must demonstrate the highest standards of ethical conduct. Integrity and strong moral character must be the foundation for all interpersonal relationships.

We should also strive to build positive relationships with everyone who could touch our program, including: athletic department employees, university staff and faculty, members of the community, local businesses, local coaches – youth, HS, travel, and alumni.

Staff Development

The coaching staff is an important part of the softball program. Members of the coaching staff will contribute their knowledge and skills in helping develop the players, as well as aiding the head coach in building a championship-caliber softball program. It is imperative that the coaching staff has passion for coaching. If a coach isn't passionate about what they do, they will not reach their full potential. The staff must also be loyal, not only to the head coach, but the team and the university. They must be open-minded, professional, enthusiastic, and have integrity.

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE HEAD COACH & COACHING STAFF

- Deal with all coaching situations with honor and integrity. If we as coaches need to discuss potential problems and/or disagreements it will be behind closed doors.
- Give the assistant coaches ownership, responsibility and authority. Delegate responsibilities and provide mentorship.
- Let the assistant coaches coach on the field within their personality.
- Never ask or expect someone to do something that I have not done as an assistant.
- Maintain an atmosphere that is conducive to learning.
- Never be outworked.
- Take initiative to make the tough decisions.
- Have both short-term and long-term goals for the program that everybody knows and understands so that everyone can work towards those goals.
- Have a hierarchy of communication so that all program communication is efficient and clearly understood.
- Plan and organize each day's activities. Be prepared for every meeting, drill, practice.
- Make the experience memorable for the players and everyone involved with the program.
- Drive and maintain a positive atmosphere that is conducive to success.
- Listen to assistant coaches/administration's suggestions and philosophies.
- Treat ALL members of the program with dignity and respect.
- Be extremely loyal to the assistant coaches and do everything possible to help them grow professionally.
- Communicate all decisions with assistant coaches and keep them fully informed.
- Always keep assistant coaches and their families above all else.
- Love, serve, and care for the players and assistants as if they were your own family.
- Keep the well-being of the players as the most upmost importance.
- Be active and involved with: other teams within the athletic department; the faculty; other university events; the community, softball alumni.
- Don't expect anything less than perfection in every aspect of the softball program. Perfection is unattainable, but we should continue to strive for it.
- Do everything you can do to develop a winning attitude.
- Study and work hard to make yourself a great coach. Educational growth is a must for any coach in order to maintain, sustain and develop new innovative ways of coaching, new teaching techniques, and better ways to improve teaching.
- Be professional in attitude, responses, work/personal appearance.
- Be sincerely interested in the success of our players and other members of the coaching staff.
- Never give up on a player.
- Be positive and never doubt that we will be successful.
- Be creative and have the ability to think on your own and apply gained knowledge of the game.
- Never take your disagreements to practice.
- Don't get complacent as the season goes on. Don't let the little things slide in the discipline of our players; this will lead to poor habits.
- Do not choose favorites. Work with every player on the squad.
- Have something to say after each effort. Remember, this is coaching and "don't coach out of frustration." Don't just tell an athlete what they are doing wrong, show them how to correct it; this builds credibility.
- Strive to make your group the best on the field, take pride in your work.
- Never lose your poise or confidence, coach those things that you know how to fix.
- Players must perform on the practice field with a sense of urgency, hustle is the key ingredient. Continue to remind them of the standard.
- Gain the respect from your players, don't demand respect, you must earn it.
- Talk to your athletes about the importance of classroom demeanor, doing well in class, staying current on all classroom assignments and homework.
- Develop the character of the players you coach. In order to do so, you must provide a positive example.
- Have a presence after practices. Make sure every player leaves with a positive feeling about the day. Never try to be the first one out the door.
- Be yourself. Be consistent. Be fair. Be firm. Be available.
- Accept nothing less than 100% effort.
- Provide a safe, inclusive, and welcoming environment for all participants.
- Use positive coaching strategies to motivate student athletes.
- Create an environment where mistakes are viewed as learning opportunities.
- Be honest with all athletes about their abilities and shortcomings.
- Develop practices where players can learn and are engaged at all times.
- Develop a competitive environment that allows the players to develop and improve.
- Remember to have fun and be human.
- Be prepared for practice and drills before hitting the field.
- Coaches are servant leaders and responsible role models.
- We should always be striving to develop deep relationships with our players. However, coaches should always maintain a relationship that is professional. In nature. We are their coaches, not their friends.
- Provide discipline and structure for each player and help them mature and grow as young women.
- Be firm, fair and consistent regarding discipline.
- Embrace the new ideas and philosophies and accept change (conceptual, not just physical acceptance).
- Always use appropriate language.
- Be sincerely interested in the success of our players and other members of the coaching staff.
- Constantly focus on the little things.
- Take pride in your positional group and the work they do.
- Each coach must be completely committed to the program and must maintain unwavering support of the program in public and in front of the team.
- The players have to trust us and know that we are there to support them in their journey toward becoming good people. We must have genuine care and concern for the young people we are responsible for.

Practice Philosophy & Development of Athletes

We want to focus on developing the overall athleticism of our players in everything we do on the field and in the weight room. More specifically, we want to focus on proper posture and the development of proper biomechanical movement patterns.

APPROACH TO PRACTICE SESSIONS

The practice field is our classroom. Nothing is more important to success than the time we spend on the practice field. We must utilize our time wisely and efficiently. All practices will be structured with the intent of creating a max number of quality reps position by position and designed to meet specific goals for each day, week, and season. We will have practices that are highly detailed and organized. We will not, however, be afraid to be flexible throughout the practice in order to meet the needs of our players.

Our teaching process will be divided into four stages: Explanation, Demonstration, Correction, and Repetition. Stress the *why* as well as the *what* and the *how*. We will work on the fundamentals all year long. Our practice will be organized in a progressive fashion insure continued repetition of sound fundamentals throughout the year.

If we are to change the attitude of our players, we must change the attitude for what it takes to win. Take the next step on the ladder. Our practice sessions are the time when we must develop that mentality. We must outwork every team we play. We win during the time on the practice field. We will be fundamentally sound and both physically and mentally tough!

- Practice should be EXPERIENTIAL in nature
 - All drills should have a focus on development and progression
 - Fundamental skill development and player development should happen in concert with the experiential learning
 - Drills should focus on athleticism and proper movement patterns
- Quality reps
 - Drills should be developed/modified to make sure that athletes are receiving as many quality reps as possible
 - Focus on proper technique—do not reinforce bad habits!
 - Time spent standing and watching should be limited
 - All team drills will be split into rotations or stations to limit standing around
- Practice should simulate game play as much as possible
 - Practice is preparation and games are the payoff of that preparation
 - Athletes should expect that practice is building towards something

Preparation, Evaluation, and Scouting

- We will use video in all of our practices to evaluate each player and to help us create a plan to continue their development and progression. We will also chart several elements of our practices, especially when we are practicing live game situations. Again, this will help us to evaluate our practice and teaching methods, while also evaluating individual players. It will also help us to engage our players in learning more about the finer elements of the game.
- We will use video analysis and detailed scouting to prepare our team to face upcoming opponents. The more prepared we can be for another team's tendencies, the better our chances for success on the field.

Developing the Total Athlete

The key to every successful program is the development of the players within the program. In order to win games consistently each and every year, a program must continuously develop the players within the program. We will implement a program that is holistic and athlete-centered in nature. The holistic approach focuses on all aspects of the individual, understanding that there is more to development than sport-specific skill work. Athletes are people first and athletes second. A coach's role, therefore, is to assist in developing their athletes within a holistic framework, so the athlete can develop outside of their sport as much as inside.

Below is a brief description of each of the primary areas of focus, followed by a graphic on the following page demonstrating the flow of this concept.

Academic Development

- The development of good academic habits in the program will ensure that the student-athletes will excel in the classroom and progress toward earning their degree.

Wellness & Recovery

- We must educate the athletes on the subject of wellness, as well give them the tools to recover from the physical and mental stresses of being a student-athlete. Wellness encompasses both the physical and mental aspects of a healthy lifestyle. More specifically, wellness includes sleep, prehab/posthab treatments and routines, proper rest from activity, learning to deal with stress, and seeking help when the student-athlete feels overwhelmed.

Mental Performance

- We will provide tools for our athletes to learn how to more appropriately handle pressure and deal with adverse situations. We will also help them understand more completely the aspects of teamwork and communication. Educating the student-athletes in these areas allows them to develop perspective and learn how to handle tough situations on and off the field. In life, the ability to deal with adversity and to put things in proper perspective will allow them to overcome obstacles and challenges.

Postgrad Prep

- It is not enough for us to support our student-athletes in a strictly academic sense. We must help prepare them for life after graduation. We can give them guidance and direction as well as helping them understand what to expect. We must take an active role in their goals and aspirations after they leave our university.

Nutrition

- Leading a nutritionally balanced life as a college student is not always easy. We can provide education and tools to our student-athletes to help them make nutritional decisions that will not only help them be more successful athletes, but will teach them lifelong habits they can utilize after their playing career is over.

Skill Development

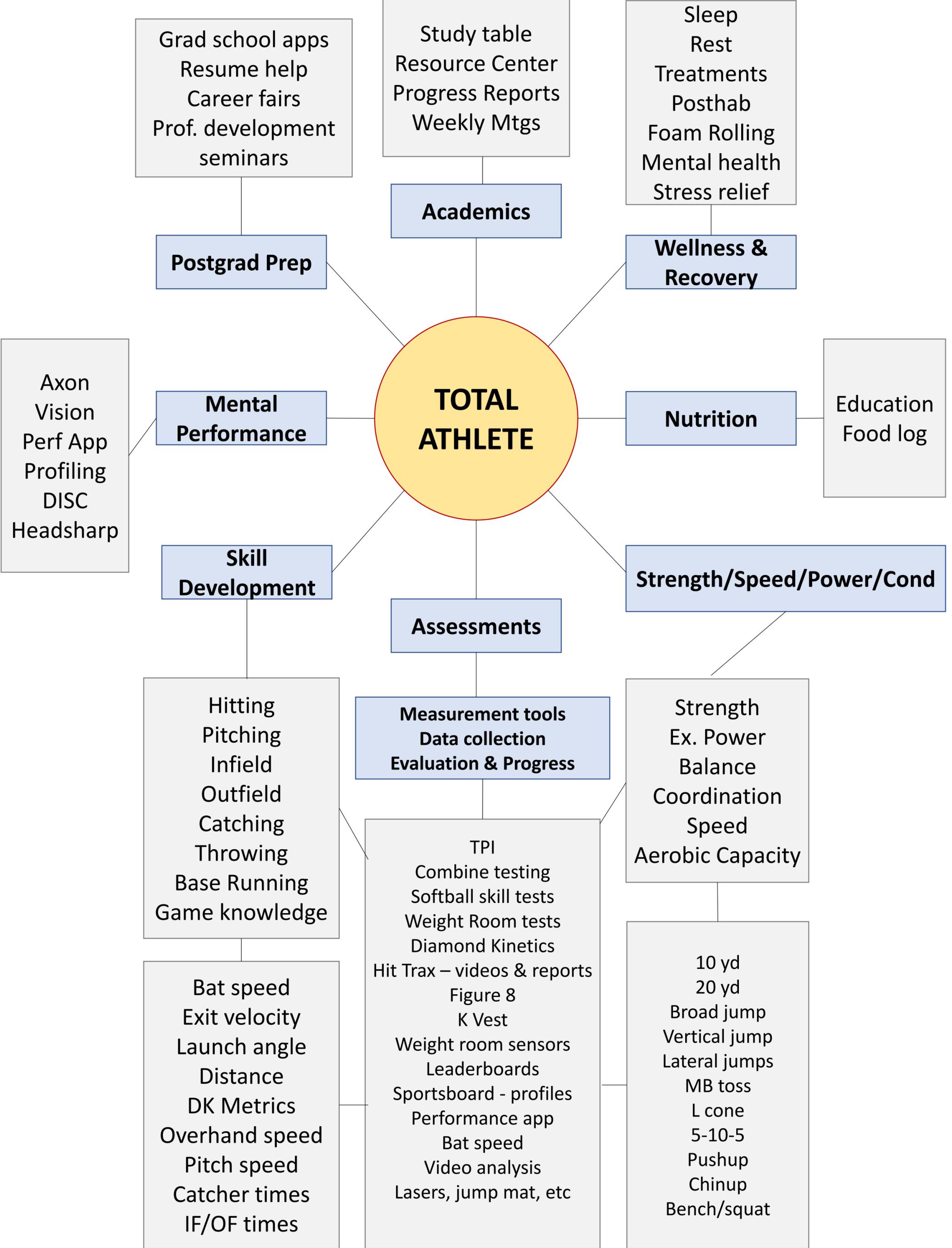
- As coaches, we must examine every fundamental skill necessary for the continued development and progression of our athletes. It is important to learn how to bring out the athleticism in each athlete by developing the most efficient biomechanical movement patterns for each skill.

Strength/Speed/Power/Conditioning

- We must be committed to a program that develops the physical attributes of our athletes. This includes: strength/power program, speed development, overall conditioning, pre-performance activities, post-performance activities.

Assessment

- In order to properly measure the development and progression of our athletes, we must assess them in as many areas as possible, as often as possible. Not only does it help us to gauge the level of improvement, it will help us to continue to modify our philosophies and teaching methods. It will also allow us to develop an evaluation system to compare the athletes in our program.



University and Community Involvement

UNIVERSITY

- Promote our home events in a variety of ways to increase attendance.
- Make gameday a fun experience for all involved.
- Encourage student-athletes to be involved with as many extra-curricular activities as possible
- Encourage players' attendance at other sporting events.
- Attend other university events as much as possible.
- Involve the faculty and staff in the program.
- Be available to help with other sporting events.

COMMUNITY

- Become involved with youth programs.
- Involvement in the local schools.
- Summer 'Team Camps.'
- Summer Youth Camp.
- Accept and perform public speaking at local clubs and organizations.
- Play an active role in as many community events as possible.

ALUMNI SUPPORT

- Keep a current working list of alumni.
- Build relationships - make contact with as many alumni as possible.
- Inform alumni of all softball events.
- Invite alumni to practices allow them to talk with the team about their experiences.
- Serve as an 'Honorary Captain' on game day.
- Alumni weekend.
- Monthly Newsletters.

FUNDRAISING

- Evaluate current effectiveness of all fundraising actions.
- Establish goals in coordination with Office of Development/Athletic Department.

DEVELOPING A RELATIONSHIP WITH FACULTY MEMBERS

- Each professor will get a letter from our staff at the start of the academic year notifying them of our academic standards.
- Ask for their cooperation in tracking the progress of our players.
- Encourage our student-athletes to personally communicate with their professors on a regular basis.
- Coaches will attempt to make contact, via email, with teachers to open lines of communication.
- Designate a game as 'Faculty and Staff' appreciation day.
- Institute a faculty honorary captain for all home games. The student-athletes nominate faculty members that they feel deserve to be recognized for their efforts as educators.
- Invite faculty to attend a practice.
- Host a faculty 'get together' to raise awareness/appreciation for the players.
- Send thank you notes to professors who go above and beyond to help our players.

SOCIAL MEDIA

- We will use social media to promote our program to potential student-athletes, fans, parents, and members of the community. Social media can play a vital role in the perception of an athletic program. We will highlight our successes on and off the field while giving others an inside look into the program. In addition to promoting upcoming contests, we can use social media to promote other softball-related events.

Recruiting

In order to compete on a yearly basis, we must recruit outstanding student-athletes. To fund applicants with a top financial aid package, we must recruit high academic student-athletes. There is strong competition for the top prospects, so it is important to contact a large number of candidates in order to increase our chances of yielding a solid recruiting class.

RECRUITING WILL BE OUR HIGHEST PRIORITY

The key to yielding top prospects will be the implementation of an organized system that will allow us to uncover as many prospects as possible. Our goal should be to never play against a quality player in the conference who we were actively recruiting. Another goal is to bring in 4-5 quality athletes each year.

We will always focus on building relationships with the recruit and their parents—this is the most vital component of finding student-athletes who are a fit for our program and our philosophies. We must always be articulate, honest, and enthusiastic person so that we can leave a strong impression on the recruit and their parents. The recruiter must understand and be able to convey the advantages of an education at our institution. They must also be able to sell the softball experience as an integral part of the educational process.

WHERE DO WE RECRUIT?

Focus on Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. We must also recruit the top prospects at the national level to continue to improve the overall quality of our program.

WHO DO WE RECRUIT?

As a starting point, we want to recruit quality, high caliber athletes who meet the university's minimum requirements for SAT and ACT scores, GPA, and class rank. We want to recruit athletes who feel that softball is very important and are committed to working hard to improve the program. Above all, we want to recruit students who are winners in all aspects of their lives! It is crucial that both education and softball are important aspects in the prospect's decision-making process.

COACH CONTACT

Once potential prospects have been identified through personal observation or student-initiated means, the recruiter should contact the high school and travel ball coaches to gather more information about the prospect's playing ability, as permitted by NCAA rules.

CORRESPONDANCE

Develop a contact system as permitted by NCAA regulations. Phone calls, text messages, hand-written letters, and personal emails. Stay in touch with top prospects on a weekly basis. Verify all academic information. Encourage prospects to take the ACT/SAT early and often. Also encourage them to apply to the school and fill out all necessary financial aid forms. Explain application and financial aid procedures.

SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

We must have a continuous presence on all social media platforms. This means posting regular updates of activities in our program, as well as following and engaging with the accounts of travel teams, coaches, and our top prospects.

Recruiting

VIDEO EVALUATIONS

Encourage prospects to send in a video highlighting all aspects of their game. Fill out an evaluation of the film.

CAMPUS VISIT

- Be highly organized and prepared with information about the prospect.
- Match prospect with the “right” member of our squad.
- Know what things are important to the recruit and emphasize those things.
- Set up admissions and financial aid appointment, campus tour, and meal.
- Give the prospect and their parents a lot of attention. Make them seem important, even if they aren’t a top prospect.
- Prep coaching staff and squad members with info regarding the prospect.
- Prepare an itinerary and informational packet for the prospect.
- Be sure to contact the prospect soon after the visit to see what they thought about the experience.

IN-SEASON RECRUITING

It is very important that we stay in contact with recruits during the season. Be sure to ask them how their season is going. Try to obtain news reports on their seasons. Invite recruits to attend one of our home games if possible. Also, we should try to attend games of any local top recruits to not only evaluate their talent, but to also promote our program.

SUMMER/FALL RECRUITING

In order to get an early start on underclassmen, we should go to as many travel ball tournaments and recruiting events as possible. Again, this will be important in evaluating potential prospects and promoting our program. At the beginning, of the summer and fall recruiting periods, the coaching staff will meet to lay out a plan for where we will recruit. At the completion of each event that we attend, we must update our recruiting database accordingly.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Encourage prospects to apply for admission as early as possible. Be sure that all parts are completed in full. Also make sure that test scores and transcripts are forwarded to the school. Remind prospects of all deadline dates.

FINANCIAL AID

Be sure that prospects complete all necessary school forms and federal forms. Remind prospects of all deadline dates. Encourage prospects to apply for all scholarships that our institution offers. Have the parents become involved with the financial aid procedure. Speak with them if you call and the prospect is unavailable. Do not count on the prospect alone to complete all necessary documentation for financial aid and application to the school.

GENERAL NOTES

Encourage every prospective athlete to fill out questionnaire so we can maintain and monitor our contact with them.
Stay in contact with our top recruits at least once per week.
Log all calls and visits in recruiting software.
Check recruiting software to see activity by recruits with our emails and links.