# DIGITAL LIONS

## UAFS eSPORTS

# Official Handbook
## and Code of Conduct

# Digital Lions eSports Program

**Official eSports Handbook and Code of Conduct**

# INTRODUCTION

The Digital Lions eSports Program Handbook will serve as your guide to answer questions regarding eSports-specific policies and procedures. If you have further questions, contact the Coaches or other Program Leadership listed on the contact page at the end of this Handbook.

This handbook is *in addition* to the policies and procedures in the University of Arkansas – Fort Smith Student Handbook and Code of Conduct, the course catalog, and other academic department and support services guidelines. Refer to resources listed on the myUAFS app and the University of Arkansas - Fort Smith for non-eSports concerns.

As an eSports student-athlete you are considered a responsible adult. Therefore, all choices and decisions regarding personal and academic life reside with you. Participation as an eSports Student-athlete is a privilege, and will require you to fulfill certain expectations identified in this handbook, including, but not limited to:

- Maintaining full-time[1] status as a student at the University of Arkansas – Fort Smith
- Maintaining a minimum grade point average of 2.25
- Complying with the UAFS Student Handbook and Code of Conduct
- Complying with all eSports Program Handbook policies and procedures
- Participate in all practice and games, except when declared unfit by an authorized authority, doctor, or is in any other way unable to participate through no fault of their own
- Adhering to practice guidelines, by not organizing or participating in unsanctioned team practice or coaching sessions
- Not participating as a professional, on pro teams, or in non-collegiate tournaments during the collegiate season unless approved by the eSports Program Leadership.
- Not seeking additional coaching for teammates or promoting methods counter to those taught by official UAFS eSports Program coaches without prior approval.
- Obey the decisions of the coaches regarding manners and behavior when traveling. The conduct of all team members is the responsibility of the accompanying Program Coach

Communication
The UAFS eSports Program Discord is the default for all eSports Program-related communication. It is vital to check the server regularly. UAFS email is another line of communication with the eSports department.

Twitch.tv/UAFSDLeSports streams team competitions. Other official social media platforms, recruitment, and scholarship information are listed on the UAFS eSports Program website.

# eSPORTS PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION & LEADERSHIP

eSports Program Coaches
The eSports Program Coaches have been hired by the University to develop, lead, and shape the Digital Lions eSports Program. The goal of the coaches is to ensure the continued prosperity of

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[1] Exceptions may be made for seniors' final semesters and WATC/PEAK students who intend to attend UAFS.

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the eSports Program, as well as to review, evaluate and uphold the policies and procedures of the University of Arkansas - Fort Smith, the Department of Campus Recreation and Wellness, and those within this eSports Program Handbook.

### eSports Student Workers and Interns
The eSports Program employs student workers to assist with program-wide duties, including, but not limited to: lab and practice monitoring, room maintenance and supervision, communication between players, teams, and coaches, program promotion and recruitment, and other duties as assigned. Student interns are primarily used for Program-wide social media and marketing. They share in the goal to ensure the continued prosperity of the eSports Program, as well as to review, evaluate and uphold the policies and procedures of this eSports Program Handbook.

### Other eSports Program Leadership
The eSports Program Coaches report to the Director of Campus Recreation and Wellness, as well as the Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management and Academic Affairs. They share in the goal to ensure the continued prosperity of the eSports Program, as well as to review, evaluate and uphold the policies and procedures of the University of Arkansas - Fort Smith, the Department of Campus Recreation and Wellness, and those within this eSports Program Handbook.

## ACADEMICS

An eSports student-athlete's major purpose at UAFS is to pursue an academic degree. While the eSports program directors and coaches are concerned with the general welfare and academic achievement of every eSports student-athlete and will assist with finding the appropriate support services, you are **responsible for your academics.**

eSports student-athletes are expected to complete all academic assignments, and to attend all classes (except in situations listed below). Conduct and participation are expected to be consistent with acceptable classroom performance.

You are strongly encouraged to consult with your academic advisor or individual instructors about academic problems or concerns. As a student, you are responsible for full cooperation with university personnel in all academic matters.

You are expected to maintain a minimum grade point average of 2.25. Any players with a grade point average lower than this amount will be placed on probation for one full semester and expected to seek assistance from the UAFS Academic Success Center until their grades see improvement.

Any student players at the 2.25 grade point average will face restricted lab access limited only to practices and competition. If you stay below a 2.25 GPA minimum for one full academic year, you may be dismissed from the eSports Program.

The coaches will monitor your GPA throughout the academic year – checking Final grades at the end of Fall and Spring.

When absence due to illness or an emergency occurs, you are expected to communicate both with your professors and the eSports coaches, and missed academics are to be caught up as per course syllabi and professors' instructions in a timely manner.

Academic Scheduling for Practice.
Try to be mindful of possible eSports practice times when scheduling classes. However, the eSports Coaches will do their best to work around your class schedules every semester.

Scholarships
When awarded, scholarships are awarded for one year and will be reviewed for renewal in subsequent years. Violations of the terms and conditions listed in this handbook may result in loss of scholarship.

If participation in the sport is terminated by either the UAFS eSports Program or you, this offer will be rescinded immediately, and you may be responsible for the unpaid portion of the scholarship prorated from the time participation ends.

Retention of scholarships is contingent upon the following criteria: You must pass 24 credit hours in the two terms of attendance immediately preceding the term of participation. A second term freshman must pass 9 credit hours in the first term. Students must maintain a 2.75 GPA and qualify for varsity or "Blue" teams in order to earn a scholarship. Scholarships are currently for 10% tuition.

Additionally, you must meet eligibility requirements required by UAFS, and may include other organizations depending on the title you are competing in.

eSports scholarships are not available for coursework taken during summer.

You should file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form yearly to qualify for additional sources of financial assistance.

## eSPORTS STUDENT-ATHLETE CONDUCT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As a responsible team member, you shall give your energy and skill to the best of your ability and to the self-discipline which membership implies. All UAFS policies must be adhered to and held in the highest regard. Violations of policies may result in disciplinary action, including removal from the eSports team or program. University policies may be found the UAFS Student Code of Conduct.

AnyKey Keystone Code
In addition to the UAFS Student Code of Conduct, the Digital Lions eSports Program has adopted the AnyKey Keystone Code, as follows:

Our community welcomes everyone and includes all, no matter their shape, size, color, gender, background, disability, or beliefs. We uphold four fundamental values.

1. **Compassion**: Treat others as you would be treated; consider their perspectives.

You value the diverse perspectives, backgrounds, and opinions of others, even when different from your own. You appreciate that all viewpoints come from the life experiences of fellow human beings. You understand that online interactions impact real people in real ways, both offline and online.

2. **Integrity**: Be honest, be committed, play fair.

You behave honorably and honestly. You take responsibility for your words and actions. While playing games, you honor the rules and spirit of honest competition.

3. **Respect**: Respect all other humans, teammates and competitors alike.

You respect everyone regardless of their background, identity, physical appearance, or beliefs. Even in competitive gaming where "trash-talk" is common, you are a good sport and respect opponents as fellow human beings, keeping the banter to the game, not ever making it personal.

4. **Courage**: Be courageous in competition and in standing up for what is right.

You have the courage to moderate your own behavior, speak out against harassment, and report violations by others. You do not tolerate harassment or hate speech of any kind, even when you are not directly involved.

## eSPORTS FACILITY USAGE AND GUIDELINES

The eSports Program lab is located on the second floor of the Baldor Technology Center, room 207. Lab door access is controlled via card swipe, which is monitored regularly via morning access report and security camera. The schedule for lab access is dependent on practice, open lab, and competition schedules and changes each semester.

In the event of having official matches that go beyond curfew, you may utilize the facilities until the final match has concluded.

You are expected to respect and maintain the cleanliness of the facility equipment, stations, and common areas. This includes, but is not limited to:
- Food and drink are to be consumed in the common areas only, except for small containers that may be sealed and/or capped and are not inherently messy.

- No outside guests are allowed within the eSports facility without prior authorization. Access card reporting will be used to identify unauthorized usage.
- At times eSports facilities and/or equipment may be used for events such as LANs, high school visits, recruiting events, etc., and may not be available for practice. Advance notice will be given as much as possible.
- Students found breaking curfew or entering the lab when access has been denied/restricted will face discipline which may include further restrictions from utilizing the facilities, repeated offences will lead to revocation of competition for the remainder of the season, up to removal from the team and program.

## TRAVEL

Travel Procedures
Team travel is defined as a team traveling outside the Fort Smith area when team members are representing the University of Arkansas - Fort Smith. When traveling, members are to represent the University of Arkansas - Fort Smith in a positive manner and are held to the Student Conduct Code and are subject to disciplinary action by the University for breach of conduct. All travel is subject to approval and budget allowance.

All University regulations must be followed when a team desires to travel. It can be expected that one of the Coaches may accompany the team on all road trips. Failure to submit all travel forms on time may result in a team not being allowed to travel. All teams wishing to travel must obtain permission from the Coaches in order to do so.  Travel forms can be obtained from the Coaches after the travel request is granted.

You must abide by the rules of travel set by the eSports Program Coaches.

Separate Travel
If it becomes necessary for you to travel separately to a competition from the rest of the team, this must be coordinated in advance with the Coaches. If this is not done prior to leaving, then permission is automatically denied. An athlete travel release form must be signed by you, acknowledging a release of liability of the eSports Program, the coaching staff, and the University. If you are under the age of 18, your parent or guardian must also give prior approval for travel if you are not traveling with your parent or guardian. Permission will be granted on a case-by-case basis as evaluated by the team's coaches and directors.

If an exception is requested and approved for you to return home without the team, you are required to return to the University within 48 hours of the end of the competition to receive travel expenses.

Travel Absences
eSports Coaches communicate with faculty for excused team-related absences such as competitions. You are expected to communicate with your professors ahead of time on each

upcoming absence as well, both as a courtesy to your professors and to assure you stay ahead of their academic requirements.

At no time should you misrepresent yourselves to professors by asking for class excuses to attend "open events" (non-University-recognized eSports activity). Once this becomes known to the eSports Program coaches or Leadership, you will be immediately suspended from team participation and face further disciplinary actions.

## MARKETING & MEDIA

Most marketing (print, online, t-shirts, etc.) for the eSports Program will originate with the Coaches and any social media intern on staff. Any marketing outside of this that teams or affiliated clubs wish to utilize must be preapproved by the Coaches to ensure that all University policies are being followed.

<u>University Of Arkansas - Fort Smith Logos</u>
Any items being purchased that include UAFS or any type of mascot image must approved by the Department of Marketing and Communications. All teams acquiring materials with the UAFS logo without following these procedures may be subject to immediate probation.

<u>Fliers & Handouts</u>
All fliers, handouts, and advertisements associated with teams must be approved by the Coaches before anything is printed or distributed. Teams may not distribute fliers to any on or off campus locations without prior approval. This includes the placement of fliers on cars, telephone poles, etc.

<u>Social Media</u>
The eSports Program actively uses social media to promote the program, events, recruit, and network. As members, you should expect that your image and information may be used in promotional materials.

Teams and affiliated RSOs are encouraged to utilize social media sites to promote and market their events to members and fans. Any individual team who wishes to have a social media site must first be approved by the Coaches prior to the creation on the site. The site must have the disclaimer on the site: *"These materials are not endorsed, approved, sponsored, or provided by or on behalf of the University of Arkansas - Fort Smith."*

Site administrators are also responsible for all material on the site, including the comments/posts of those who may or may not be affiliated with the eSports Program. It is the responsibility of the team's site administrators to constantly monitor sites and edit any material necessary so as to positively reflect the team or RSO, the eSports Program, the Department of Campus Recreation and Wellness, and the University of Arkansas - Fort Smith. Sites will be monitored on a regular basis to ensure compliance. Teams who are not in compliance may be asked to remove their social media site.

Be aware that coaches and directors may prohibit certain types of social media participation. You may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including loss of scholarship and team participation, if there is any negative misrepresentation of the University and/or eSports Program. Examples of inappropriate and offensive behaviors concerning participation in online communities may include posting of photos, videos, or comments of the following:

- Showing personal use of alcohol and/or tobacco (e.g., holding cups, cans, shot glasses, etc.)
- Sexuality, including links to websites of a pornographic nature or other inappropriate material.
- Condoning drug-related activity, including, but not limited to, images that portray the personal use of marijuana and drug paraphernalia.
- Inappropriate or offensive language, including, but not limited to, threats of violence and derogatory comments involving race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, or veteran status.

For your own safety, please keep the following in mind as you participate in social networking websites:

- Consider setting security settings to private, so that only friends can view your profile as well as your pictures.
- You should not post your email, home address, local address, telephone number(s), or other personal information as it could lead to unwanted attention, online predators, stalking, identity theft, etc.
- Be aware of who you add as friends on social media. Do not blindly accept requests unless you know the person directly.
- Consider how the above behaviors can be reflected in all social networking applications.

Standards of Conduct and Guiding Principles of Social Media
Act Ethically and with Integrity. All UAFS student-athletes, student workers, and Coaches should practice and model ethical conduct, in doing so, all parties are expected to:

- Be personally responsible for individual actions;
- Conscientiously meet University responsibilities;
- Refrain from posting anything confidential, sensitive or private.
- Be Fair and Respectful to Others. Everything you post is public, and privacy does not exist in the world of social media. Consider the consequences of a post and how that may reflect on both the poster and the University.
- All members of the UAFS eSports Program should consider the following when posting:
  - Be professional and polite.
  - Think twice before posting.
  - Do not post information about specific people unless it is a positive post regarding an award or honor.
  - Do not pick fights and/or engage in them.
  - Do not take/post photos unless the person knows and allows you to take/post the photo.

- Protect Confidential and Proprietary Information.
- Do not post any confidential information or internal matters regarding the University, or the eSports Program.
- Postings related to the recruitment of potential student-athletes are strictly prohibited in any form.
- Do not post anything sensitive or private.

*Accuracy and Clarity*. Make sure that you have all the facts correct, verified, and checked before you post anything relating to the University, the eSports Program, or student-athletes. All statements must be true and not misleading.

*Relevance and meaning*. Think about how any potential content might advance or affect the image of the University, the eSports Program, or the student-athletes.

*Branding*. Do not use the UAFS or the eSports Program logo without express written permission.

*Best Practice and Reminders*. Remember many different audiences view your posts including but not limited to prospective recruits, fans, alumni, kids, local authorities, parents, Grand View faculty/staff and family.

# DISCIPLINE AND GRIEVANCE

<u>Removal from a Team</u>
Participation in eSports is a privilege rather than a right. You may be removed from the team, placed on team probation, or otherwise disciplined by the team at the discretion of the Program Coaches, team captain, or director for any reason, including but not limited to academics, conduct, performance, or violating the UAFS Code of Conduct, if the decision is compliant with all University policies.

<u>eSports Grievance Guidelines</u>
In the event you have a grievance relating to your participation in the eSports Program, you first seek a meeting with the coaches to discuss the issue and seek a solution to the problem. If requested to have a team captain or teammate present for this meeting, that request shall be honored.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the initial meeting, you may request a meeting with the Director of Recreation and Wellness. Staff involved in this meeting may include other parties according to their discretion which may include coaches, teammates, etc., if deemed necessary.
If further recourse is deemed necessary, you may request to meet with the Vice Chancellor of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs. eSports Program staff will record a written summary of the proceedings and send it to all parties involved.

## ADDING AN eSPORTS TEAM

Most eSports teams will be added to the eSports Program at the discretion of the eSports Coaches. The addition of eSports teams may depend on student player demand, game viability as a competitive collegiate eSport, cost of game and any associated equipment or technology, as well as overall game 'fit' within the mission of the eSports Program. Any students wishing to add a game/team to the Digital Lions eSports Program should contact one of the coaches (contact information listed under Important Contact Information) or uafsesports@uafs.edu to set up an appointment to discuss the possibility.

## EXIT PROCESS

Upon completion of your eSports participation at UAFS, the eSports Program requires that you be offered an opportunity for an in-person exit interview, which will be conducted by a member of the eSports staff.

## IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

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*ATTRIBUTION*
Adapted from the Grand View University (GVU) *Grand View 2024-204 eSports Student Handbook*, as well as the UAFS Department of Campus Recreation and Wellness *Sport Club Manual*.

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