



University of Washington

Varsity Letter Award Policy



The University of Washington Department of Intercollegiate Athletics (ICA) is proud to acknowledge the athletic accomplishments of our student-athletes. It is the philosophy of ICA that intercollegiate competition and individual athletic growth are meaningful steps in our students' educational experience. The Varsity Letter Award program is based on a rich tradition of recognizing athletic participation at the University of Washington. The "W" blanket and sweaters/jackets have been awarded for over 75 years.

Criteria

Varsity letters are earned through participation and competition. The exact criteria for lettering is determined by the head coach and approved by the sport administrator. All award winners must be eligible to compete to receive the yearly award. The criteria for lettering will be kept in the compliance office. It is the responsibility of the head coach to inform their student-athletes of the requirements for lettering.

Yearly Letter Awards

Letter Earned	Award	Criteria
W 1	Jacket	First varsity letter earned
W 2	Watch	Second varsity letter earned
W 3	Ring	Third varsity letter earned
W 4	Blanket	Graduation and one of the following: a) fourth varsity letter earned b) four years of participation with two letters earned c) four years of participation with one letter in senior year d) transfer students who have lettered at least twice e) permanent injury?

It is possible to earn the W1, W2, or W3 awards in the same year as the blanket. NCAA regulations limit the total cost of awards given to a student-athlete in a single year. Therefore, a student-athlete may have to choose between the blanket and the other letter award if both awards would put them over the individual limit. However, a student-athlete also has the option to purchase the other award at his or her own expense. Because of the yearly participation award limitations, each sport is limited to spending \$35.00 for underclassmen and \$175.00 for seniors. (This does not include post-season awards, tournament awards, special achievement awards, or championship awards.)

Informing student-athletes of the Policy

Throughout the year student-athletes will be informed of the varsity letter awards program. The following methods will be used:

- Student-Athlete handbook (will include the departmental award policy and how to order the awards).
- Yearly rules education meetings.
- Big “W” Club e-mail reminders (sent at the end of each quarter and individual season to the student-athlete list serve).
- Coaches will inform student-athletes if they have earned a letter at the end of the season and provide ordering information.
- Order forms will be available on the gohuskies.com website.

Award Ordering and Distribution

Student-athletes will contact the “Big W Club” staff to place the order and to be sized when appropriate. Order forms will be placed on the gohuskies.com website to facilitate the process. All awards must be ordered by the student-athlete within one year of earning the award. A student who leaves school and returns to graduate will also have a one-year period in which to order the blanket. If a student fails to order the award within the one-year time frame, they will have the option to purchase the award with their own funds. The compliance office and the “Big W Club” will verify that the student-athlete is eligible to receive the award.

The “Big W Club” will sponsor an awards banquet each fall to distribute all awards earned the previous year. A student-athlete must return to the University of Washington and participate in athletics to be eligible to pick up their award (except for student-athletes who have exhausted their eligibility).