

# **Iowa Athletics Sports Sponsorship FAQ**

## **Why are we making the announcement now?**

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a financial exigency which threatens Iowa Athletics continued ability to adequately support 24 intercollegiate athletics programs at the desired championship level. In March, the NCAA and Big Ten Conference announced the cancellation of their basketball tournaments and all other competitions for the remainder of the year. On August 11th, the Big Ten Conference announced a postponement of fall competitions. Iowa Athletics now projects lost revenue of approximately \$100M and an overall deficit between \$60-75M this fiscal year. A loss of this magnitude will take years to overcome. In collaboration with the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, and UI President Bruce Harreld, we determined the current circumstances require us to adjust our sports sponsorship offerings. By making this announcement now, it affords our student-athletes the opportunity to make decisions on their future education and athletic endeavors.

## **What impact do these decisions have on Gender Equity and Title IX compliance?**

The University of Iowa remains committed to adhering to federal Title IX gender equity compliance. This plan will allow us to continue to provide equitable national championship and academic opportunities for our student-athletes in compliance with Title IX.

## **Why were these sports chosen for elimination?**

A thorough process in which all financial options and each of our programs were reviewed.

The following specific factors were considered in determining sport sponsorship at Iowa:

- History of the sport at Iowa
- Sponsorship of the sport at the NCAA Division I level
- Historical competitive success, within the Big Ten Conference and NCAA Division I
- Impact on diversity within our student-athlete and staff populations
- Investment required to achieve competitive excellence on the conference and NCAA Division I level
- Impact on Gender Equity and Title IX compliance
- National, State, and local interest
- Impact on the student-athlete experience across all sports, now and in the future
- Current and future prospect for success of the sport
- Expense savings from the elimination of the sport
- Iowa High School Association sponsorship of sport(s)
- Current and future facility opportunities/needs

**What will resources allocated towards these programs be utilized for?**

The resources will assist the athletics department in reducing debt and create a long-term repayment plan that allows continued success for our remaining sports.

**Were any fundraising campaigns considered prior to sport elimination?**

While we are grateful for our many loyal and generous donors, private support simply cannot meet the escalating and compounding costs of supporting excellence across the board. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a financial exigency which threatens Iowa Athletics continued ability to adequately support 24 intercollegiate athletics programs at the desired championship level.

**If donors step forward, will any of these programs be retained?**

Our decision to reduce our program offerings is final. While we are grateful for our many loyal and generous donors, private support has not met the escalating and compounding costs of supporting excellence across the board.

**Could the university and athletic department utilize endowments to retain some or all the programs?**

We are extremely thankful for the support of our loyal and generous donors. Endowments typically have donor-directed restrictions that indicate the specific area of support or type of support. While Iowa Athletics receives significant private support, these efforts in and of themselves, cannot support the escalating and compounding costs of supporting excellence across the board.

**Will affected student athlete's scholarship be honored?**

Yes, we hope that all student-athletes would choose to remain and receive their degree from Iowa. Iowa will honor all athletic financial aid agreements until the student completes their undergraduate degree at Iowa, or until such time the student chooses to transfer to another institution.

**What happens to the incoming students in the affected sport programs? If they opt to withdraw from UI will they receive a refund on their deposit?**

The athletics department compliance office will work closely with each incoming student to ensure their financial needs are met. In addition, our compliance office staff will counsel each student-athlete on their available options.

**How will UI support the affected coaches, and staff?**

Employment contracts for all coaches will be honored. The university will support a coach's decision to seek employment prior to the end of their contract. All support will be provided to coaches and staff in seeking employment. Our athletics department human resources staff will be available to provide counseling regarding employment options.

**How does this decision reflect on the stability of UI Athletics?**

Win. Graduate. Do It Right. We believe this decision better positions Iowa Athletics to excel at the conference and national level for the future. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is significant and we are making sound decisions necessary to work through the short-term, and long-term, challenges. At the same time, we are creating a path forward to sustain academic and athletic excellence, in the post pandemic era.

**Will any sports transition to compete as a club program?**

Following the completion of the 2020-2021 intercollegiate athletic season, it is our hope that these students, if they choose, could continue to compete in the robust UI club program.

**Will affected student athlete's scholarship be honored?**

Yes, we hope that all student-athletes would choose to remain and receive their degree from Iowa. Iowa will honor all athletic financial aid agreements until the student completes their undergraduate degree at Iowa, or until such time the student chooses to transfer to another institution.

**How will Iowa Athletics assist student athletes who choose to transfer to other NCAA programs?**

We hope that all student athletes would choose to remain and receive their degree from Iowa. However, should a student-athlete decide to continue their education at another institution, the athletics department compliance office will assist all student athletes on a personal level. All necessary documentation will be provided in a timely manner to ensure student-athletes can transfer efficiently.

**What other cost saving measures did UI Athletics implement?**

Over the past few months, several budget cuts including reduction in compensation, operations and position eliminations have been, and continue to be, implemented. While the department has been self-sustaining for several years, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a financial exigency that threatens our continued ability to adequately support 24 intercollegiate athletics programs at the desired championship level. In July, UI announced various reductions including reductions in Intercollegiate Athletic.

<https://now.uiowa.edu/2020/07/university-iowa-announces-budget-reductions-begin-fiscal-year-2021>

**How does this decision impact diversity within the department?**

Diversity, equity, and inclusion is an important part of the Iowa Athletics Departments mission. The elimination of these four sports will not negatively impact our efforts in this area.

**What are the plans, given the unknowns of COVID-19 if a sport program is unable to field a full, competitive roster?**

It is our intent to compete during the 2020-2021 academic year. If due to COVID-19, or other factors, we are unable to complete a sport season we will continue to honor the student-athlete scholarships and coaches' contract. Iowa will honor all athletic financial aid agreements until the student completes their undergraduate degree at Iowa, or until such time the student chooses to transfer to another institution.