

*Minutes of the Presidential Committee on Athletics*

*Zoom Meeting*

*September 3, 2020*

**Members Present:** Berg, Cavey Lang, Colin, Courter, Foley Nicpon, Friestad, Gerke, Grosland, Hollingworth, Kehoe, Kelly, Matheson, Mueller (represented by Conroy), Nonnenmann, Torner, Vogan, Voss, and Zaharis.

**Members Absent:** Sayon and Weinstein.

**Also Present:** Barta (Henry B. and Patricia B. Tippie Director of Athletics Chair), Binns (Executive Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion), Clerry (Associate Athletics Director), Davies (Assistant Athletics Director/Chief Financial Officer), Grooms (Assistant Professor), Hansen (Vice President for Student Life), Henderson (Senior Associate Athletics Director), Lehnertz (Senior Vice President, Finance & Operations), Modestou (Director of Equal Opportunity & Diversity and Deputy Title IX Coordinator), Tovar (Associate Athletics Director and Interim Associate VP of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion), Weitzel (Associate Director, Athletics Communications), Wilson (Senior Associate Athletics Director), and Wright (Associate Professor).

**Guest Present:** Bruce Harreld (President, University of Iowa).

Chair Zaharis called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

**I. Welcome and Introduction of PCA Members and Athletics Staff**

PCA and Athletics staff members introduced themselves to the Committee.

**II. Approval of Minutes - May 7, 2020**

Berg moved to approve the May 7, 2020, minutes, Hollingworth seconded. Committee members were unanimous in their approval.

**III. Opening Remarks - President Harreld**

President Harreld thanked PCA members for their time and efforts and emphasized the importance of the Committee's work. He also thanked Tovar for stepping into the Interim Associate VP of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion position, and Binns for taking the Executive Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion position.

Highlights were given of the numerous successes student-athletes and sport teams had on the field and in the classroom, showcasing the principles behind the Athletics Department's value statement "Win. Graduate. Do It Right." Looking forward, President Harreld charged Committee members to focus on the following:

- A. Find creative ways to mitigate the mental health toll on student-athletes during this unprecedented year.
- B. Prioritize achieving high Graduation Success Rates in all sport programs to help student-athletes prepare for life after graduation.
- C. Create and enhance processes that allow student-athletes to feel at ease discussing concerns or issues without fear of retaliation.

**IV. Election of Vice Chair**

Nonnenmann nominated Cavey Lang for consideration as vice chair; Torner seconded. Since no other nominations were received, full approval was recorded from PCA members.

**V. PCA Policy - Online Courses**

Chair Zaharis led a discussion on suspending the Online Course Policy due to COVID-19's impact on in-person classes. The policy requires student-athletes to enroll in a minimum of three semester hours in a traditional face-to-face course each Spring and Fall semester. Chair Zaharis called for a motion. Courter moved for approval; Nonnenmann seconded. Unanimous consent was given.

**VI. Announcements - Chair Zaharis**

- A. Tovar reported on planned recognitions for over 400 student-athletes with a 3.0 GPA or above who typically would have been recognized during a fall athletic event. A "PCA Day" will be designated to allow student-athletes to have pictures taken with their medallions. Honorees will also be toasted at an Academic Team Meeting in front of their peers.
- B. Committee members who would like a Big Ten Manual should email [rae-parker@uiowa.edu](mailto:rae-parker@uiowa.edu).
- C. A free download of the 2020-21 NCAA Manual can be found at: <http://www.ncaapublications.com/p-4605-2020-2021-ncaa-division-i-manual.aspx?CategoryID=0&SectionID=0&ManufacturerID=0&DistributorID=0&GenreID=0&VectorID=0&CategoryID=0&SectionID=0&Manuf>.
- D. The PCA Directory will be emailed when finalized.

- E.* The Athletics Department Organizational Chart will be sent electronically.
- F.* Subcommittee Assignments will be sent out soon.
- G.* PCA members are required to complete FERPA (Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act) Training if they have not already done so. Direct questions to Chair Zaharis.
- H.* Those who haven't returned a signed Confidentiality Pledge should do so immediately. Email pledges to [marj-meisner@uiowa.edu](mailto:marj-meisner@uiowa.edu) or [rae-parker@uiowa.edu](mailto:rae-parker@uiowa.edu).
- I.* Subcommittee chairs were encouraged by Chair Zaharis to use Matheson's summary report and President's Harreld's charge to the Committee for ideas for activities. Nonnenmann shared the Equity Subcommittee will consider a name change to the Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Subcommittee at the next subcommittee meeting. Torner reported the Student-Athlete Well-Being Subcommittee would continue to focus on wellness and prioritize a meeting with the Iowa Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (ISAAC).

***VII. ISAAC Report - Conroy***

The ISAAC report will be given this semester by Conroy, who represents Mueller.

- A.* ISAAC had their second meeting last night, where members discussed goals, including how to support peers struggling with mental health issues.
- B.* Conroy reported the Big Ten Conference Voter Registration Initiative has been successful. ISAAC's goal is to have 90% of student-athletes and peers registered to vote.

***VIII. NCAA Report - Barta, Grosland, Hollingworth***

- A.* Barta reported COVID-19 has necessitated emergency NCAA legislation regarding eligibility, financial aid, return to play, practice schedules, etc.
- B.* With the Big Ten postponing the start of fall sports, Athletic Directors continue to meet daily to find a path forward for competition to start. Student-athletes who do not feel safe playing this year have an opt-out option that does not affect eligibility or financial aid.

***IX. Athletics Director's Report***

- A.* Barta reported on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) concerns, indicating the Athletics Department staff were aware of issues and are actively working on solutions. Discourses with student-athletes and an outside consultant report requested by President Harreld provided new insights. The Athletics Department

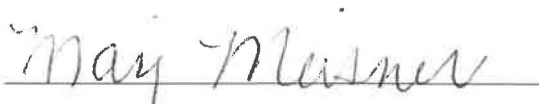
staff is committed to continuing to listen to the concerns of student-athletes and improving DEI efforts moving forward. Binns is currently making modifications and enhancements to the DEI Strategic Plan. He will collaborate with the DEI Accountability Board, university partners, Athletics staff, the Equity Subcommittee, and student-athletes on updates to the DEI plan, including how to provide safe, comfortable environments where student-athletes can go to have candid discussions regarding concerns or issues.

- B.** Athletics Senior Staff collaborated with university partners during the pandemic on a strategy for students to return to campus. Lehnertz and others created a broad-based plan which included a pilot project opportunity for Athletics. Working with the UI Hospitals and Clinics medical staff to develop testing protocols and daily screening processes, the Athletics Department brought five sport teams back to campus in the summer to participate in the pilot project. To be ready for the start of competition, team doctors, athletics trainers, student-athletes, etc., are currently working together to ensure the monitoring process works effectively.
- C.** The economic upheaval caused by the pandemic forced Athletics Senior Staff to make difficult budgetary decisions. Throughout the financial decision-making process, priorities such as maintaining athletic scholarships, honoring staff contracts, and keeping staff updated were sustained.

Barta reviewed with Committee members the three phases created to react to different revenue-stream possibilities. Barta referenced the Iowa Athletics Sports Sponsorship FAQ (see attached) and pointed to the financial timeline and the criteria used when budgetary constraints forced the Athletics Senior Staff to make decisions regarding the discontinuation of sport programs. He also detailed options made available for impacted student-athletes. Phases were vetted with the Board of Regents, President Harreld, the UI Finance & Operations Officer, and the UI Controller, as well as reviewed with a central committee on campus to ensure equity.

**X. Adjourn**

The meeting ended at 5:17 p.m.

  
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Marj Meisner  
Recording Secretary

# Iowa Athletics Sports Sponsorship FAQ

September 2, 2020

## 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 (including football). **Iowa Athletics now projects lost revenue of approximately \$100M and an overall deficit of \$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. There is never a good time to make this announcement. We will assist each student-athlete with making the decision they feel is best for their future education and athletic endeavors.

## UI Athletics Financial Timeline

**January 2020 Anticipated FY21 Budget Revenue** - \$127,882,971  
**January 2020 Anticipated FY21 Budget Expenses** - \$123,882,971  
**Excess 2020 Revenue to University transfer and reserve fund-** \$4M

Prior to COVID-19 the anticipated FY21 budget was forecasting a \$3M increase in revenue over the previous year.

**May 2020 Anticipated FY21 Budget Revenue** - \$112,589,125  
**May 2020 Anticipated FY21 Budget Expenses** - \$112,589,125

On March 12 & 13<sup>th</sup> the B1G and Men's and Women's NCAA Basketball Tournaments were canceled due to COVID-19. UI Athletics implemented \$15 million in budget reduction including operating expenses and compensation adjustments.

**August 2020 Anticipated FY21 Budget Revenue** - \$23,223,130  
**August 2020 Anticipated FY21 Budget Expenses** - \$97,974,696  
**FY21 Anticipated Deficit** - (\$74,751,566)

On August 11<sup>th</sup>, the Big Ten Conference announced the postponement of fall sports (including football). That announcement led to a drop in anticipated revenue for the Iowa Athletics Department of more than \$100 million compared to our pre-COVID budget.

Meanwhile, despite best efforts, Athletics expenses can only be reduced so much in a given year. The athletics department's continuing expenses go towards student-athlete scholarships and services, facilities debt, sport operations, and now-reduced salaries for department employees.

**How much money will be saved with the elimination of the four sports selected?**

The direct and indirect cost to support the four sports is approximately \$5 million per year.

- Direct Costs (salaries, scholarships, medical, sport operations)
  - Men’s Swimming & Diving     \$1,284,814
  - Women’s Swimming & Diving \$1,479,323
  - Men’s Gymnastics                 \$761,673
  - Men’s Tennis                         \$749,479
  - \$4,275,289
  
- Indirect Costs
  - Academic Services
  - Athletic Training
  - Strength and Conditioning
  - Nutrition/Fueling Stations
  - Facility/Major Maintenance - (2020-21 cost is more than \$3 million)

Only some of these expenses are recoverable in 2020-2021 (for example, salaries and student-athlete scholarships will remain in place), but the future savings of approximately \$5 million per year will help to close the long-term debts cause by COVID-19.

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

The \$5 million per year will assist the athletics department in creating a long-term debt repayment plan that allows continued success for our remaining sports.

**Did the athletic department consider all other options prior to discontinuing sports?**

Yes. The Athletic Department made several other cuts prior to discontinuing sports.

- Salary reductions were implemented across the department in July 2020
- 40 positions within the department were either not filled or eliminated
- Operating budgets were cut across the board for the current fiscal year.
- A second round of compensation reductions were made in the form of mandatory 15 days of unpaid leave between September 1 and December 31<sup>st</sup> 2020.

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

The decision to discontinue sports was the last choice in the plan to move forward in recovery from the fiscal challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite these cuts, Iowa Athletics is still anticipating a \$75 million deficit in 2020-21.

**Were any fundraising campaigns considered prior to sport elimination, and could a group of donors raise the money to reverse the decision?**

While we are grateful for our many loyal and generous donors, our past experience would indicate private support won't be able to overcome the \$75 million deficit created by the COVID-19 pandemic. Our decision to reduce the number of sports programs offered is final.

The following two examples summarize fundraising campaigns previously conducted by Iowa Athletics in an effort to provide context as to the magnitude of the challenge.

- UI Campus Recreation and Wellness Center (Opened 2010)
  - Overall Facility Cost Including Pool - \$69,125,000
  - Pool Cost - \$9,000,000 – paid for by Athletics
  - Total private support - \$422,533
  
- Hansen Football Performance Center (Opened 2014)
  - Total Facility Cost - \$55 million
  - Total private support - \$38.3 million
  - Athletics largest facility fundraising effort in history

**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. Existing endowments typically have donor-directed restrictions that designate a specific area or type of support. The total dollars required to create new endowments to fund the four sports being discontinued is simply too high.

- Estimated Cost to Endow each sport program
  - Men's and Women's Swimming - \$70M would generate an annual operating budget of \$2.8 million. (Assumes a 4% payout)
  - Men's Tennis - \$20M would generate an \$800,000 operating budget (Assumes a 4% payout)
  - Men's Gymnastics - \$20M would generate an \$800,000 operating budget (Assumes a 4% payout)

**How will you support the student-athletes whose sports are being discontinued?**

We will work hard to support each student-athlete as they go through this very difficult transition. We have promised each student the following:

1. We will provide the opportunity for each of the four teams to train and compete at Iowa this season (2020-21) to the extent the COVID-19 pandemic allows.
2. We will honor all student-athletes' financial aid agreements until the student completes his/her undergraduate degree at Iowa, or until such time the student chooses to transfer to another institution.
3. Should a student-athlete decide to continue their education at another institution, the athletics department compliance office will assist him/her on a personal level. All necessary

documentation will be provided in a timely manner to ensure student-athletes can transfer efficiently.

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

Iowa engaged in a thorough process in which all financial options and each of our programs were reviewed. Several different sports, and sport combinations, were considered. In the end, the sports selected were determined to provide the best path forward in a complex and difficult situation.

While the single reason for reducing sport sponsorship at Iowa was the financial crisis brought on by COVID-19, the following specific factors were used in the evaluation:

- 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

Not all factors applied to each of the four teams. We remain thankful for the contributions and successes of each of our teams and student-athletes, and will continue to celebrate them even as the pandemic forces Iowa Athletics to chart a different path forward.

**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 help meet their financial needs. 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. 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.

Swimming: The Iowa Flyers Swim Club (IFLY) is a registered USA Swimming club operated by the University of Iowa Recreational Services. The club practices and competes at the Natatorium of the Campus Recreation and Wellness Center. It offers competitive opportunities to University of Iowa students through its masters program. The club hosts national meets like the Speedo Midwest Challenge, which was hosted by the University just last year. More information: <https://www.teamunify.com/team/iauif/page/home>

Tennis: The University sponsors the Hawkeye Tennis club which provides open court times in the same facility used by Athletics, monthly drills, and opportunities to compete with other players on campus and in the community. The Club also offers University students the opportunity to tryout for its co-ed travel team. More information: <https://uiowa.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/tennis-club-hawkeye>

Gymnastics: The Gymnastics Club at Iowa exists to support University of Iowa students who wish to continue training and competing in the sport of gymnastics. The club practices in the same facility used by the Athletics—the North Gym of the Field House. More information: <https://uiowa.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/the-gymnastics-club-at-iowa>

### **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.

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

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are important parts 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' contracts. 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.