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NEWS RELEASE

Redesigning The University of Akron – Athletics update

Posted May 14, 2020

The University of Akron (UA) announced today that it will discontinue three intercollegiate athletics programs at the end of the 2019-20 academic year as part of its plan to reduce the University's financial support to the Athletics Department by approximately 23 percent (\$4.4 million). The action is being taken as part of the University's overall redesign to emerge from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in a way that financially stabilizes the institution.

Affected by the decision are the sports of men's cross country, men's golf and women's tennis. With the change, UA, which previously sponsored 20 sports, will now have 17 sports (7 men's sports and 10 women's sports). Akron will remain a member of The Mid-American Conference (MAC).

The move affects 23 male and 9 female student-athletes. The elimination of these sports, along with salary reductions for select coaches, staff position eliminations, scholarship and operating expenditure reductions will total approximately \$4.4 million.

ALIGNMENT WITH PEERS

"These decisions are very difficult but they are important and necessary at this time," said Director of Athletics **Larry Williams**. "This action aligns us with our Mid-American Conference peers in the total number of sports and is part of the ongoing effort to redesign the University to ensure that UA continues to invest in high-demand, high-quality academic programs."

Williams continued, "This morning, I met via video conference with the student-athletes affected by the decision. We understand that some may choose to leave Akron to continue in their sport at another university, and we have committed to offering them our full support throughout that process. This is a difficult day for all of us. We have dedicated student-athletes, coaches and athletics staff who have embraced being a Zip and make tremendous contributions to campus life in class, in competition and in our greater community."

Williams said the announcement was made today to allow the student-athletes as much time as possible to find new schools at which they can continue in their sports, if they choose to do so. This also will allow the three coaches and one graduate assistant who are impacted time to find new positions.

In reaching this decision, the University considered many factors, including: program cost, athletics facilities, University and community impacts, and likelihood of noteworthy success at the current and future funding levels.

Further details regarding the decision can be found in [this FAQ document](#).

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