

POLICY ON ADDING OR TERMINATING A VARSITY SPORT

The process for deciding to expand or contract UMBC's intercollegiate sports program (by increasing or reducing the number of teams representing UMBC) shall be initiated by the Director of Athletics representing the Department of Athletics. The approval or rejection of the proposal is the responsibility of the President of UMBC in consultation with the Athletics Director, the Athletics Policy Committee (representing staff, faculty, and students), and Vice President for Student Affairs. Additional consultation with other vice presidents, governance bodies or committees representing them, and alumni representatives is recommended as appropriate. It is recommended that the Student Government Association especially be consulted.

Decision Criteria

In making a decision to expand or contract UMBC's intercollegiate sports program the following criteria shall be considered:

1. Consistency with UMBC's image and mission;
2. The availability of facilities that meet NCAA and conference standards;
3. The record of recent competitive success or anticipated competitive performance once a team is established;
4. The record of support and interest from students, alumni, and the community or the anticipation of sufficient support and interest once a team is established;
5. The impact on diversity and gender representation consistent with NCAA regulations reflecting the goal that athlete demographics reflect UMBC's student body profile.
6. Access to a suitable conference, conference and national championship tournaments as appropriate or, if proposing to eliminate a sport, maintaining membership in a conference;
7. A financial analysis projecting the impact of the proposed action, especially its impact on the Student Athletics Fee, the budgets of the Athletics Department and the university, and staffing requirements.

With regard to these criteria, while some criteria may have more or less weight than other criteria in influencing a decision to add or drop a sport, no one criterion alone should determine a particular decision. For example, UMBC should not eliminate a sport *only* because ticket sales and sponsorship are insufficient to cover its expenses or due to lack of competitive success.

The Addition of a Sport

If the Department proposes to add a varsity sport:

- The Department shall prepare a written proposal responding to the criteria listed above. The proposal should detail the anticipated revenues, their sources, and projected expenses, including those of personnel and facilities, related to the offering of the new sport.
- Such a proposal would normally be no longer than eight pages in length, that is, a cover letter plus an average of one page or less per criterion.
- The proposal shall be reviewed by the APC on behalf of the faculty, staff, and student senates. The APC shall submit its report, which may include a recommendation for or against the proposal, to the Athletic Director, the Vice President for Student Affairs, the President, and the University Steering Committee. The APC report should be completed and submitted in a timely manner, usually no later than three weeks after receiving the proposal.
- Before the decision is made, it is recommended that the Athletics Director and/or the Vice President for Student Affairs hold public forums to discuss the proposed action.

Eliminating a Sport

If the Department proposes to eliminate or suspend a varsity sport:

- The Department shall prepare a written proposal responding to each of the criteria listed above. The proposal should clearly explain the rationale for the proposed action and detail its financial implications.
- Such a proposal would normally not be longer than eight pages in length, that is, a cover letter plus an average of one page or less per criterion.
- The proposal shall be reviewed by the APC on behalf of the faculty, staff, and student senates. The APC shall submit its report, which may include a

recommendation for or against the proposal, to the Athletic Director, the Vice President for Student Affairs, the President, and the University Steering Committee. The APC report should be completed and submitted in a timely manner, usually no later than three weeks after receiving the proposal. If there is a need to make an expedited decision, the APC should do all that it can to meet a time frame recommended by the Athletics Department and President.

- Before making the decision, if practical, it is recommended that the Athletics Director and/or the Vice President of Student Affairs hold public forums, especially with students, to discuss the proposed action.

Rights of Student-Athletes and Coaches

In addition to the criteria listed above, the interests and dignity of the student-athletes, coaches, and alumni involved should be respected in any decision to eliminate or suspend a sport.

All NCAA regulations regarding the rights of student athletes when a sport is eliminated must be followed. In particular, UMBC shall recognize a student-athlete's right to continue to receive scholarship support through graduation and his/her right to transfer to another institution. Whenever possible, the affected coaches and players shall be informed of a decision to eliminate a sport before the decision is made public. Such a decision does not preclude the possibility of re-starting that sport later.

The Director of Athletics is responsible for ensuring that all coaches are provided a copy of this policy on an annual basis. Candid discussion between the Director of Athletics and any coach concerned about the possible termination of a sport is encouraged, even if that coach's sport is not in jeopardy at the time. Language covering this policy and its implications may need to be added to the coaches' contracts dependent on advice of University Counsel.

Approved by the UMBC Athletics Policy Committee: May 19, 2015