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SDSU Women's Rowing Program to be Discontinued Following 2020-21 Academic Year

QUESTION AND ANSWERS

How many student-athletes does this impact?

There are approximately 50 student-athletes who are on the roster this year. We recognize this is a difficult day for the current team members and the nearly 500 alumni of the women's rowing program since 1998. Women and men have been rowing for SDSU throughout the history of the university. SDSU and Associated Students will sponsor a women's club program if the students choose to create it in a manner consistent with the 21 robust club sport programs already in existence at SDSU.

When will be the final season?

The 2020-2021 spring competitive season will be the final season for the NCAA Division I SDSU women's rowing program.

How will the student-athletes be supported during this time?

For the student-athletes who continue their undergraduate degree at SDSU, their existing athletic scholarships will be honored through graduation and they will continue to receive comprehensive academic and athletic training resources. For those who choose to pursue academic-athletic careers elsewhere, we will provide support during the full transfer process. Our campus counseling services and providers will also be available for student-athletes who choose to use them.

Why was this decision made?

Ultimately, a number of factors, including financial sustainability and gender equity prompted this decision. The need to realign the student-athlete population to more closely resemble the overall institution gender composition was a leading factor. The current financial impacts created by the COVID-19 pandemic prompted an evaluation of our sports portfolio with an eye towards the long-term success for our various sports and how to financially sustain that success.

Because of the steady growth of the population being served and the national increased expectation for services, our support staff have been spread thin. To provide the necessary level of support and the quality experience student-athletes have enjoyed at SDSU, it is essential that we right size our sport profile.

Can donors fundraise enough to keep the program?

This decision has been made to address equity as well as the current financial challenges facing SDSU Athletics. Financial support to fund this program cannot address SDSU's broader equity compliance obligations. Aztec Club members are generous in their philanthropic support of student-athletes who are pursuing athletic excellence while earning a degree and preparing for a career after their time at SDSU. Due in part to their generosity we can continue to honor the scholarships and services for all impacted student-athletes. Donor gifts will also be used to continue this high level of support for the remaining 18 sports that SDSU Athletics sponsors.

Why discontinue the sport now when competing in the Spring?

Making the decision before the end of the Fall 2020 semester allows the student-athletes time to make decisions with their families about their future at SDSU, and whether they would like assistance in the transfer process or wish to continue their academic pursuits at SDSU. We will assist the

student-athletes during the spring semester to finalize their plans going forward and, as shared, we will support students who choose to remain at SDSU.

If gender equity is a factor, why is a women's sport being discontinued?

SDSU men's undergraduate enrollment has increased in the past decade. At the same time, women's athletics participation/rosters have increased. To be in compliance with Title IX proportionality, we must bring the men's and women's roster sizes more in line with the demographics of SDSU's undergraduate enrollment. Adding a men's sport of the size needed is not a financial option. Investing in women's sports will remain a priority.

What sacrifices have already been made before making this difficult decision?

As SDSU navigates the evolving financial landscape, we continue to identify solutions to close the budget deficit and implement necessary changes to prepare for the uncertain economic future. SDSU Athletics has taken a 25 percent reduction in costs this year and will continue to be creative in meeting the additional shortfall.

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