

UMass Dartmouth announces discontinuation of eight intercollegiate athletic programs

UMass Dartmouth Chancellor Robert E. Johnson announced today the decision to discontinue eight intercollegiate athletic programs, effective immediately.

The programs include women's equestrian, men's golf, men's lacrosse, co-ed sailing, men's and women's swimming and diving, and men's and women's tennis. The University is committed to providing support and advising to the 94 affected students.

"Although these changes will serve UMass Dartmouth Athletics and its student body well for years to come, I cannot begin to imagine the sense of loss our student-athletes must feel at this moment. I want them to know that this decision in no way reflects their tremendous contribution to our University," said Chancellor Robert E. Johnson. "It is because of these contributions – not just on the field – but in the classrooms, labs, and in the community that makes our student-athletes such valuable members of our community."

The decision came after multiple reviews over the past decade of the UMass Dartmouth intercollegiate athletics program to formulate a long-term strategic plan that would provide the best possible competitive and co-curricular experiences for our student-athletes. The reviews analyzed major aspects of the current Department of Athletics & Recreation structure, including available resources, gender equity, enrollment, full-time/part-time coaches, sports sponsorship trends, facilities, as well as strengths and weaknesses of programs.

“Though the review and subsequent actions taken on the future of intercollegiate athletics was needed, I am deeply saddened by having to discontinue sponsorship of these programs,” said Athletic Director Amanda Van Voorhis. “The implementation of this action now will allow our department to work within a sustainable financial model going forward, and we will continue to provide the best possible experience for our student-athletes.”

The savings realized because of these changes will be allocated strategically within the Department of Athletics & Recreation and reinvested in the remaining 17 athletic programs. It should be noted this process began before COVID-19 and is in no way related to the current health crisis.

“We realize how difficult this decision is, but I want to reaffirm our commitment to athletics and student-athletes at UMass Dartmouth. This is not a cost-cutting measure, it is a re-allocation of resources within Athletics for future success,” said David Gingerella, Vice Chancellor for Administration & Finance. “In the end, the University believes this will set a course for intercollegiate athletics going forward that is similar and consistent with our peer institutions.”

UMass Dartmouth will continue to sponsor the remaining 17 intercollegiate programs – eight men’s sports and nine women’s sports – as members of the Little East Conference, while both the football and ice hockey programs will remain as affiliate members of the Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference.

Read Chancellor Johnson’s full message to the campus community. Additional information and resources on today’s decision are available at umasd.edu as well as corsairathletics.com.