

THE IMPACT OF UMN'S DECISION

1. 40 women lost sporting opportunities due to the cuts¹

- a. The U of MN orchestrated their Title IX issue by methodically removing women athlete roster spots in the years leading up to the cut.
- b. Instead of adding a women's program to reach Title IX compliance, adding more opportunities for women, UMN decided to play with the numbers by cutting men, thereby giving the appearance that women now have more opportunities

2. The U of MN - What is the truth? Money wasn't the issue. Title IX wasn't the issue

- a. The U of MN said that men's gymnastics, tennis, as well as men's indoor and outdoor track had to be cut due to financial reasons and Title IX concerns. This decision needs to be studied whether it was premeditated, and that COVID-related financial pressures and Title IX were used as an excuse.
- b. The U of MN athletics' finances recovered much quicker from COVID than projected. Despite this, Gopher Athletics and the U of MN regents did not change their stance that COVID-related financial pressures necessitated the cuts.
- c. The U of MN presented a new proposal mere hours before the regent vote to keep outdoor track but cut the other three programs. Adding outdoor track radically changed the financial "savings" and the Title IX numbers. The U of MN did not explain to the athletic community why the late minute change was made or its impact on finances or Title IX. The Board of Regents voted to approve the new proposal without any analysis of the new proposal's impact.

3. Difficulty with Title IX compliance could cut more sport programs soon

- a. The U of MN manufactured a potential Title IX issue by reducing women roster spots.
- b. The U of MN now has a diversity problem by eliminating their most diverse Olympic sport (Men's Track) based on their gender.
- c. More teams, including women's teams, could be eliminated in the future to comply with Title IX due to the resulting impacts of roster reductions and the elimination of these three men's programs.

POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

- Reinstating The U of MN men's gymnastics, tennis, and indoor track back with the addition of 1 woman's sport or re-adding the 40-cut women athlete roster spots. There are many examples of top universities that found a way to reinstate programs (see Sports Illustrated).² Quoting Mr. Dellenger on **February 12, 2021**, "**Over the last several months, eight schools have reinstated at least one sports team that they had previously cut. One school, William & Mary, reinstated seven. Two other schools, Brown, and Dartmouth reinstated five each. Some schools announced the reinstatements just weeks after announcing they were discontinued.**"
- There are existing endowments and alumni pledged donations (\$900,000+ from men's gymnastics; \$1,300,000+ from men's tennis; and \$1,800,000+ from Men's and Women's Track)
- There are successful ways to raise revenues to fund these men's collegiate programs like summer camps, clinics, and meets. Special commission to study sport cuts and potential solutions from a special commission for all U of MN system schools, informing the MNSCU system as well.

'This Is for the Next Generation': Inside the Fight, at Stanford and Beyond, to Save Olympic Sports

At Stanford and other schools, athletes of discontinued NCAA sports teams are pushing back—and raising money to try to self-fund their programs in the process.

ROSS DELLENGER • FEB 12, 2021

¹ <https://www.startribune.com/u-will-drop-41-women-s-athletes-in-addition-to-cuts-for-men/572602682/>

² <https://www.si.com/college/2021/02/12/stanford-save-cut-sports-movement-ncaa>

Proposal for a Special Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics

The past, present, and future of intercollegiate athletics at the University of Minnesota

The Minnesota Athletics Alliance (MAA) hereby proposes that the Minnesota Senate Higher Education Finance and Policy Committee establish a Special Commission (Commission) to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the role of intercollegiate athletics within the State University System.

The MAA is a statewide, multi-sports coalition established to advocate for the educational value of athletics and the preservation of intercollegiate sports opportunities for all student athletes in Minnesota.

The NCAA is currently undergoing dramatic, systemic change that puts growing emphasis on the revenue generating sports of football and men's basketball. The MAA is concerned that the University of Minnesota is undervaluing the importance of all the other sports that do not generate revenue. Change is coming to intercollegiate athletics and the responsible course of action is to plan for that change. Dropping teams and reducing opportunities for Minnesota students to participate in sports does not best serve the educational mission of the University of Minnesota.

The purpose of the Commission is to explore the past, present, and future of intercollegiate athletics at the University of Minnesota. The Commission would:

- (1) Present an opportunity to investigate the enduring impact that participation in intercollegiate athletics has had on athletes and our communities, and to provide evidence-based proposals to guide decisions affecting the future of athletics within the University system
- (2) Examine the history of athletics in the University of Minnesota system, and the evolution of varsity sports sponsorship.
- (3) Assess current situation within intercollegiate athletics in state university system and make recommendations to sustain its long-term vitality
- (4) Explore all reasonable financing models for all Olympic sports, which would include budget reductions per sport, rethinking scholarships, and additional funding sources.
- (5) Propose ideas for repositioning Olympic sports so that they are aligned with the educational mission of the University of Minnesota. Importantly, sports teams are viewed as educational programs and not viewed as revenue generators for the University of Minnesota.

The MAA recommends that the format of the Commission be conducted as open meetings over a period (several months) and invite public comment throughout the process. The MAA also hopes that the Commission could fully engage the resources across a range of fields including education, health, corporations, amateur and professional athletic associations, academia, and of course key stakeholders.