SACRAMENTO STATE
ATHLETICS
5-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

2013 - 2018
TABLE OF CONTENTS

3 Introduction/Executive Summary
5 Athletics Vision
5 Hornet Values
6 Athletics Strategic Goals
7 Athletics Objectives and Strategies
13 Appendix
INTRODUCTION

The Strategic Plan that follows provides an ambitious—but realistic—blueprint for advancing the Sacramento State Athletics program over the next five years. It offers a cohesive, unified vision for the department and, upon its completion, ensures that the University’s 20 intercollegiate athletics teams and student-athletes are well positioned to compete and succeed as an NCAA Division I school.

In addition, the plan affirms Sacramento State's commitment to Athletics, acknowledging the essential role sports play in connecting the University to the community, growing its visibility and adding to the college experience.

The impact of a successful Athletics program extends beyond the playing field. It advances the mission of the University, contributes to the lives of its students, generates pride in its alumni and supporters, and enhances the quality of life in the Sacramento region.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The goals, objectives and strategies presented in this plan are the responsibility of the Athletics Department and its partners within the University, but they affect a broader group: students, staff, faculty, alumni and the Sacramento community. Because of this, the Strategic Plan reflects feedback from each of these constituencies.

The plan is a highly collaborative document developed by a committee of campus leaders appointed by President Alexander Gonzalez. The work of this committee was heavily informed by extensive outreach and dialogue with student-athletes, Athletics Department staff and coaches, Sacramento State students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community leaders.

By analyzing data and incorporating the opinions of these diverse stakeholders, the committee charged with writing the Strategic Plan has established institutional goals that address fundamental challenges, opportunities and priorities for the Sacramento State Athletics program:

- **Identity** – Developing a consistent, compelling brand for Hornet Athletics will reinforce the Athletics Department’s role in generating school pride and connecting the campus to the community.

- **Well-being of student-athletes** – Supporting the well-being and success of student-athletes, both on and off the playing field, is a primary responsibility of the Athletics Department.
• **Engagement** – Engaging in comprehensive efforts to connect the campus and external communities will help the Athletics Department build a supportive and committed fan base.

• **Facilities** – Identifying, funding and implementing interim and long-term improvements to Sacramento State’s athletic facilities is essential for recruiting top student-athletes and creating a positive, energetic fan experience.

• **Building a culture of success** – Winning is imperative at an NCAA Division I university. It is an expectation of the student-athletes, the coaches and the campus community. The Athletics Department is committed to fostering a championship culture.

These are fundamental goals that define success for the Sacramento State Athletics program. The Strategic Plan also outlines a clear vision, underlying values, distinct measurements of success and specific strategies that bring these priorities to life:

• **Vision** – Unifying direction and aspiration for Sacramento State's Athletics program
• **Values** – Core principles that establish the foundation upon which Hornet Athletics is built
• **Objectives** – Metrics that establish milestones and instill accountability
• **Strategies** – Prioritized steps and actions that support and further the plan's goals

The Strategic Plan is comprehensive, bold and actionable. It is designed to support the needs of student-athletes, enrich the campus community and the Sacramento region and, when fully achieved, advance the Athletics Department and University. The plan reflects a commitment to success and, in doing so, helps Sacramento State "Redefine the Possible.”
ATHLETICS VISION

Sacramento State Athletics is committed to success. We work hard to achieve excellence—on the field and in the classroom. We inspire campus pride and engage our community. We win.

HORNET VALUES

The Hornets' commitment to athletic excellence is based upon four core values. These values define who we are and how we act. More importantly, they also reflect the values of the University we represent.

   Integrity
   We work hard, we play fair and we expect the conduct of our student-athletes, coaches and staff to be beyond reproach.

   Commitment to Student-Athletes
   We provide our student-athletes with the support to develop and succeed—as competitors, scholars, citizens and leaders—at Sacramento State and beyond.

   Accountability
   We are stewards of University and community resources. We take this responsibility seriously and conduct our activities in a professional and transparent manner.

   Engagement
   We enrich lives on campus, in the community and among our alumni. We connect the University to our region.
ATHLETICS STRATEGIC GOALS

The following goals are designed to establish a strong, definitive direction for Sacramento State Athletics.

**GOAL:** Build and communicate a clear, consistent identity for Sacramento State Athletics

**GOAL:** Support student-athlete well-being, achieve academic success and promote exemplary conduct

**GOAL:** Build a dedicated fan base that supports Sacramento State Athletics

**GOAL:** Improve Sacramento State’s athletic facilities

**GOAL:** Foster a championship culture
ATHLETICS OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

GOAL: BUILD AND COMMUNICATE A CLEAR, CONSISTENT IDENTITY FOR SACRAMENTO STATE ATHLETICS

Objectives:
1. Finalize and publish the Athletics Strategic Plan by November 2012
2. Create a brand platform that includes vision, overall and audience-specific messaging, and a powerful tagline that projects a new identity for the Athletics program by January 2013
3. Draft an effective, consistent and integrated communication plan that engages key audiences, introduces the new Athletics brand and emphasizes the value of Hornet Athletics by May 2013
4. Deliver at least 100 presentations promoting Sacramento State Athletics and the Athletics Department's brand platform to community and campus leaders, campus organizations, and community groups on an annual basis

Strategies:
• Convene a committee to develop and present the Hornets' brand platform
  o Create a singular theme for the Athletics Department that captures the brand essence
  o Incorporate theme across all media and messaging— apparel, signage, advertising, website, etc.
• Develop and present a communication plan designed to launch the brand platform to key audiences
  o Create a three-tiered presentation strategy that encompasses: 1) “big picture” messaging to community leaders, alumni and University friends; 2) outreach opportunities for coaches and players to target current and potential supporters of specific sports and/or programs (e.g., the Hornet Club; 3) consistent, digestible messaging to students, faculty and staff on the benefits Athletics provides to campus
• Prepare a “campus and community toolbox” of talking points, video, web and print materials that provides administrators, coaches and student-athletes with consistent, approved messaging to utilize in campus and public presentations and appearances
• Integrate Athletics' messaging into overall University communications
• Create and implement a comprehensive engagement process for coaches and Athletics Department leaders to regularly interact with the community, increase awareness of Sacramento State Athletics and build connections with stakeholders
• Build stronger relationships with key campus partners
• Collect and communicate data on important student-athlete and Athletics Department statistics or “points of pride,” including athletic and academic success, economic impact and community service
• Re-examine current conference affiliations and, if appropriate, make recommendations to the president about changes in affiliation
GOAL: SUPPORT STUDENT-ATHLETE WELL-BEING, ACHIEVE ACADEMIC SUCCESS AND PROMOTE EXEMPLARY CONDUCT

Objectives:
1. Create a taskforce that identifies and addresses issues related to student-athlete well-being by summer 2013
2. Achieve an average response of "very good" or higher in an annual survey that measures how well student-athletes feel they are being supported
3. Achieve a department GPA of 3.0 or higher, with at least 50% of student-athletes achieving this standard
4. Maintain a student-athlete four-class average (4-cohort) graduation rate 10% higher than the general student population
5. Achieve a minimum NCAA Academic Performance Rate of 940 for each team
6. Develop a system, including baseline metrics, for measuring and evaluating student-athlete conduct by spring 2013

Strategies:
• Develop mechanisms for monitoring and addressing issues related to student-athlete well-being
  o Form a taskforce comprised of IAAC and SAAC members, athletic administrators, the faculty athletic representative, an athletic trainer, coaching staff and former student-athletes to identify and address issues related to student-athlete well-being (health care, injury treatment, nutrition, mental health, life skills, etc.)
  o Evaluate and optimize the student-athlete exit survey to determine how well respondents feel they are being supported in key areas (academics, etc.)
• Dedicate more resources for academic support of student-athletes
  o Centralize the location and administration of study hall
  o Establish a directed study hall by discipline with a tutor
  o Expand and enhance academic center capabilities by providing daily/transitory open office space for mentors and increased computer lab space
  o Create a volunteer faculty “coach” program to provide academic guidance to student-athletes
  o Hire a learning specialist for the academic center
• Identify and share best practices among coaches for increasing academic support for student-athletes
• Provide intensive support for student-athletes who are not meeting the Athletics Department’s required academic standards
  o Meet with academically under-performing student-athletes to identify and address issues that are preventing them from achieving their goals
  o Expand the capacity of the mentoring program to include a learning specialist to better meet the needs of student-athletes
• Encourage student-athletes to participate in the Student Affairs Leadership Certificate program
• Develop mechanisms for monitoring and addressing issues related to student-athlete conduct violations
  o Form a taskforce comprised of the chief student conduct officer, senior woman administrator, member of the coaching staff, the student-athlete resource center director and the faculty athletic representative to determine how to accurately identify, track and report student-athlete conduct violations
GOAL: BUILD A DEDICATED FAN BASE THAT SUPPORTS SACRAMENTO STATE ATHLETICS

Objectives:
1. Increase attendance at football games to a two-year average of 11,500 per game
2. Increase revenue from home football games by 10% annually
3. Increase attendance at men's basketball games to average 85% capacity each year
4. Increase attendance at all other sporting events by 10% annually
5. Achieve a 10% increase in the number of students who consider themselves supporters of Athletics, as reported in the semi-annual Student Survey
6. Increase Green Army membership by 500 per year
7. Grow participation in Hornet Club by 300% over five years, to approximately 600 members
8. Increase web page views to HornetSports.com by 1,000,000 per year
9. Generate 10% year-over-year increase in corporate sponsorship revenue

Strategies:
• Create and implement a comprehensive annual marketing plan, including sales targets, for the Athletics Department and each team sport
• Develop an audience-specific marketing plan to engage the campus community and work with each team to establish expectations of coaches and student-athletes in regard to campus outreach to students, faculty and staff
• Create a marketing campaign to promote viewership/listenership of games broadcasted on TV, radio and the Internet
• Complete HornetSports.com redesign, including enhancing video and multimedia capabilities and exploring website advertising opportunities with the Hornet Bookstore
• Maximize the relationship between Athletic marketing and the University’s sports marketing agency, Nelligan
• Create and implement a recognition program for the most active supporters of Hornet Athletics
• Create and implement a plan for increasing Green Army participation
• Design a pathway to progressively increase fan engagement—move supporters from the Green Army to the Alumni Association to the Hornet Club
• Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the "fan experience" at Sacramento State Athletics events and identify opportunities for improvement and increased entertainment value
• Work with campus divisions, affiliated organizations and auxiliaries to implement revenue sharing where permissible
GOAL: IMPROVE SACRAMENTO STATE’S ATHLETIC FACILITIES

Objectives:
1. Commit funding to enable Yosemite Hall to serve as the short-term home for Hornet Athletics and, by 2014, explore possible renovations, including increased capacity to serve the programs’ long-term needs
2. Explore the possibility of playing in an alternate venue for basketball for the 2014-15 basketball season
3. Develop a comprehensive multi-purpose arena plan that includes costs, revenue options, a feasibility study, land siting, and facility programming by spring 2014
4. Complete a facilities audit and master plan for Athletics as part of the University master plan projected to be completed by fall 2014

Strategies:
- Assign a committee with representation from Athletics, Facilities and Finance to conduct a facilities audit and develop a long-term facilities plan for Sacramento State Athletics
  - Develop recommendations for renovating the football/track stadium
  - Identify and prioritize improvements to the baseball, soccer and softball fields
- Identify and prioritize improvements to Yosemite Hall and explore options for a potential interim use facility
- Work with the Office of the President and University Advancement to explore and develop a fundraising plan, revenue-generating structure, and staffing model that support the short and long-term athletics facility needs of the University
- Explore possible methods to generate additional revenue to fund facility amenity improvements
- Work with The WELL and appropriate academic departments to explore increased use of The WELL for classes, which would alleviate scheduling conflicts and reduce wear and tear on the gym floor
GOAL: FOSTER A CHAMPIONSHIP CULTURE

Objectives:
1. Expect all teams to place in the top four positions in their conference and compete in postseason play
2. Expect to win the most conference championships among Big Sky Conference institutions
3. Lead the Big Sky Conference in all-conference honors each year
4. Develop a “one-team” philosophy among the 20 intercollegiate programs and Athletic staff

Strategies:
• Consider the following structural and/or procedural changes within the Athletics Department to increase communication, streamline administrative procedures and remove barriers to success
  o Implement a more transparent process for developing and disseminating (among departmental personnel) the various budgets that constitute the overall athletics budget
  o Develop, communicate and institute explicit criteria to evaluate the performance of coaches and staff
  o Review internal procedures and reassign duties, where possible, to allow coaches to better focus on coaching and recruiting
• Evaluate the current recruiting process and identify opportunities for improvement
  o Create avenues for increased recruiting information sharing and training
  o Research and implement recruiting software and technology
  o Develop multimedia recruiting materials that share the program’s strengths, history and successes and that can be utilized by all 20 programs
• Explore opportunities to provide incentives based upon athletic and academic success, including a review of University guidelines, compiling best practices from peer institutions and drafting potential bonus structures
• Instill a common vision within the Athletics Department and improve internal departmental synergy
  o Determine appropriate physical locations to post the Athletics Department Vision, Values and Goals
  o Develop a core practice uniform (i.e., sweats, workout shirts and shorts, backpack) utilized by all teams to help establish a common identity
  o Encourage a collaborative environment within the Athletics Department through team-building activities that include coaches, staff and administration
  o Schedule an annual (half-day or full-day) coaches and staff meeting
  o Schedule a regular coaches meeting to share motivational strategies, techniques and best practices
  o Share the Athletics Department Vision, Values and Goals with student-athletes at each program’s inaugural team meeting each year and reinforce them at mandatory attendance events throughout the academic year
APPENDIX

Athletics Strategic Planning Committee

- Dr. Lori Varlotta, Vice President, Student Affairs
- Dr. Terry Wanless, Athletics Director
- Bill Macriss, Deputy Athletics Director
- Dr. Steve Perez, Faculty Athletics Representative; Professor, Department of Economics
- Gary Quattrin, Hornet Club
- Paul Edwards, Director, Student Athlete Resource Center (SARC)
- John Kepley, Assistant to the President and Director of Presidential Communications
- Tony Lucas, Director, Business & Finance, Department of Public Safety
- Abbi Stone, Associate Vice President, Business & Administrative Services

Committee staffed by: Donna Thomason, President’s Office

Athletics Strategic Planning Work Groups

GOAL: Build and communicate a clear, consistent identity for Sacramento State Athletics

- Jeannie Wong – Senior Director of University Communications – Chair
- Brian Berger – Media Relations Director, Athletics
- Alan Haslam – Coordinator of Communication, Student Affairs
- Lori Perez – Assistant Softball Coach
- David Sutherland – Director of Golf
- Jack Vaughn – Director of Web Communications, Public Affairs
- Becca Whitman – Nelligan Sports Marketing

GOAL: Support student-athlete well-being, achieve academic success and promote exemplary conduct

- Dr. Steve Perez – Faculty Athletics Representative; Professor, Department of Economics – Chair
- Scott Abbott – Head Cross Country Coach
- Lois Mattice – Associate Athletic Director, Internal Affairs
- Mark McGushin – Coordinator of Life Skills and Student-Athlete Development, SARC
- Bob Shook – Football Retention Coordinator and Advisor, SARC
- T’ANTE Sims – Ticket Manager, Athletics
- Kathy Strahan – Head Softball Coach
- Ardith Tregenza – Interim Director, Student Conduct
GOAL: Build a dedicated fan base that supports Sacramento State Athletics
• John Kepley – Assistant to the President and Director of Presidential Communications – Chair
• Ryan Bjork – Assistant Media Relations Director, Athletics
• Cheryl Boyes – Director of Community Relations & Special Events, Athletics
• Mike Connors – Head Women’s Rowing Coach
• Missy Matzen – Assistant Director, Hornet Club
• Adam Primas – Director of Marketing, Athletics
• Joel Schwartz – Senior Student Affairs Research Analyst
• Dan Turner – Former Hornet Club President

GOAL: Improve Sacramento State’s athletic facilities
• John Smith – Athletic Administration – Chair
• Jamie Craighead – Head Women’s Basketball Coach
• Ali Izadian – Associate Vice President, Facilities Services
• Brandon Laird – Assistant Men’s Basketball Coach
• Victor Takahashi – Director of Facilities, Planning & Construction Services, Facilities Services
• Steve Tebbs – Director of Facilities, Athletics
• Joe Waltasti – Assistant Media Relations Director, Athletics

GOAL: Foster a championship culture
• Bill Macriss – Deputy Athletics Director – Chair
• Chris Hall – Head Men’s Golf Coach
• Kim Hughes – Head Gymnastics Coach
• Kathleen Raske – Director of Track and Field