

DENVER

ATHLETICS & RECREATION

150

DENVER ATHLETICS
TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE

1867 **2017**

STRATEGIC PLAN 2017 - 2022

MESSAGE FROM PEG BRADLEY-DOPPE, VICE CHANCELLOR, ATHLETICS, RECREATION AND RITCHIE CENTER OPERATIONS

As we approach the 150th anniversary of DU Athletics, it is important to not only look back on our history, but also to plan ahead for our legacy. Our strong foundation built on 150 years of success is an incredible opportunity to capitalize on our success of “One DU.” The University of Denver Division of Athletics and Recreation serves as an integral part of the institution and area community. As the front porch of the University, it impacts the education and experiences of countless students, faculty, staff and fans. DU Athletics is comprised of 17 men’s and women’s Division I Intercollegiate Athletics programs, 326 student-athletes and more than 150 coaches and administrative staff.

In January 2016, the Board of Trustees approved DU IMPACT 2025, a strategic framework that includes four interrelated transformative directions:

- Students Learning and Leading in a Diverse and Global 21st Century
- Discovery and Design in an Age of Collaboration
- Engagement and Empowerment in Denver and the Rocky Mountain West
- One DU: A diverse, inclusive, engaged and sustainable community that works independently and together toward this common vision

As the front porch of the University, DU IMPACT 2025 is an opportunity for the Division of Athletics and Recreation to align fully with the institution in an effort to engage and strengthen our relationships with students, alumni and the Denver Community.

The following is a comprehensive five-year strategic plan which summarizes our history and outlines the vision, mission, values, priorities and strategies for future success. This plan, in line with DU IMPACT 2025, will serve as a model in continuing to build the Division’s legacy through guidance, encouragement and support of our students in their quest of academic, athletic and social excellence.



Peg Bradley-Doppes

Vice Chancellor, Athletics, Recreation and Richie Center Operations



MOMENTUM OF PIONEER ATHLETICS

Pioneer Athletics has achieved considerable success guided by the Division's Department of Intercollegiate Athletics Strategic Plan 2008-2013 – ***Pioneering Excellence*** and the 2012-2016 Strategic Plan – ***Home of Champions***.

Conference Affiliation has been enhanced in all sports including the creation of and membership in the NCHC (National Collegiate Hockey Conference), affiliate memberships for both men and women's lacrosse in the Big East Conference, an affiliate membership for women's gymnastics in the Big Twelve Conference and a home for our core sports in the Summit League. These enhancements will continue to increase exposure for not only our sport programs but the entire University.

Guided by the plan the program moved from a Tiered Sport Concept to one that supported broad based excellence and success. The philosophy of ***Not Business as Usual*** created partnerships that enhanced revenue and managed expenses in a way that provided resources to build a championship culture in all of our sport programs and to fund excellence. As a result, the Denver's Intercollegiate Sport Program finished on top of the Director's Cup standings eight out of the last nine years. An award given to the top Division I non-football school in the nation.

We were successful in branding the University as the ***Lacrosse Capital of The West*** significantly enhancing our competitive performance culminating in the University's first National Championship in the sport of Men's Lacrosse.

With respect to exposure for the Division and the University, successful multi-media partnerships were created with Altitude Sports, ESPN Radio and Channel 4, significantly enhancing exposure both regionally and nationally. Branding initiatives such as ONE DU, PiONEer Nation, Standard of Excellence and Lacrosse Capital of the West, also contributed to enhanced exposure.

Specific strategies led to the creation of ***Pioneer Movement***. A development effort that significantly grew the number of intercollegiate athletic endowments resulted in 100 percent staff and student-athlete giving annually, significantly enhanced gifts to capital projects and increased the number of donors and contributions to the annual fund.

Successful execution of strategies led to significant enhancements in game atmosphere. Continued support of spirit squads including cheerleading, pep band and dance teams allowed them to achieve a level of success equivalent to that of other marquee Division I Institutions. Assets such as new scoreboards, the digital ribbon board and significant technology upgrades to the control room created an interactive environment enhancing fan engagement.



Other strategies led to enhanced integration between the university community, alumni and the Division of Athletics and Recreation with programs such as V.I.P (very important pioneer) card for faculty and staff, free tickets for faculty and staff to select events, recognition programs such as Academic Spotlight and Pioneer Professors as well as free student admission to ALL sports including Men's Hockey.

One of the strategies in the 2008-2013 Strategic Plan in terms of student-athlete welfare was to enhance partnerships between sports medicine, strength and conditioning, sports psychology and student services.

In the fall of 2015, the Division created the concept of Pioneer Health & Performance, the development of a collaborative effort to enhance the total student-athlete experience encompassing the areas of Sports Performance, Sports Medicine, Sports Nutrition, Sports Psychology and Mental Health. This concept became a reality with the creation of the Pioneer Performance Team fully integrating all the disciplines within one department and all under the direction of the Associate Athletic Director of Pioneer Performance. This cutting edge program is one that is being emulated by other NCAA Division I programs across the country.

On the academic front, successful planning and strategy integration led to improved performance across the board. In 2015-2016, 10 programs finished with perfect APR scores. Individually our student-athletes achieved success in the classroom each quarter with an average of 43 student-athletes receiving Dean's List honors (undergraduate students who have achieved a quarterly grade point average of 3.75 or above while taking at least 15 credit hours) and 28 student-athletes receiving Hornbeck Scholars List honors (undergraduate students who, in a given quarter, have earned a 4.0 grade point average while taking between 12 and 14 credit hours). Furthermore, the composite GPA for 2015-2016 was 3.35 and the Division's six year graduation rate is 93 percent, demonstrating the success reflected previous strategy implementation.

2017 will mark 150 years of Denver Athletics and is the optimal time to introduce the Division's 3rd Strategic Plan. This plan looks to align with the institution's overall strategic plan – DU IMPACT 2025. In the years building up to the realization of this vision, from 2017-2022, the Division of Athletics and Recreation will seek to retain the strategic success of years past and strives to maintain and capitalize on the current momentum of Denver Athletics.



MISSION

The Division of Athletics & Recreation provides athletic, recreational, and entertainment opportunities that meet the needs of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and the Denver community.

To fulfill the mission the Division will:

- Provide diverse and equitable programming
- Serve as a positive presence and unifying force in the community
- Foster personal growth and development
- Provide powerful and meaningful experiences, which forge enduring bonds with the University Vision

VISION

Our Vision as an Athletics and Recreation Division is to actively create, promote and sustain an environment in which each participant is challenged and supported in pursuit of personal growth in the areas of sports, wellness and recreational activities.

CORE VALUES

**GRADUATE
STUDENT-ATHLETES**

**UNIFY
THE UNIVERSITY
& COMMUNITY**

**COMMIT
TO INTEGRITY
& COMPLIANCE**

**BUILD
PRIDE &
TRADITION**

**SERVICE
ABOVE SELF**

**COMPETE
FOR CHAMPIONSHIPS**



THE PLAN

FOCUS POINTS | STRATEGIC PLAN FRAMEWORK

The University of Denver's Division of Athletics and Recreation programs are core elements of institutional identity. These programs not only help attract outstanding student-athletes to Denver, but also make important contributions to student and campus life, alumni engagement and national reputation.

At the forefront of the Division's plan is the charge to align Athletics and Recreation more fully with the institution's overall strategic plan – **DU IMPACT 2025**. Specific areas of alignment include a) a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusive excellence, b) engagement and empowerment in the Denver and Rocky Mountain West region, c) the advancement and celebration of one DU, alumni engagement and d) a holistic approach to educating students.

The document is not only a plan for the future but also a continual assessment of the changing landscape of Division I Intercollegiate Athletics. Positioning the Division to take advantage of these changes with the goal of enhancing the University's reputation and increasing its visibility is a top priority.

The plan seeks to align resources with strategic priorities while navigating the ever changing environment of Division I Intercollegiate Athletics and conference realignment.

The areas of focus of the plan include:

- **Academic Excellence**
- **Athletic Achievement**
- **Student-Athlete Well-Being**
- **Diversity | Equity | Inclusion**
- **Image | Brand | Communication**
- **Engagement**
- **Customer Service**
- **Financial Stewardship**

The next steps of the process will be the creation of strategies to guide efforts in the attainment of goals and the identification of benchmarks that will monitor progress toward those goals and provide accountability



ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

G O A L :

PROVIDE DENVER STUDENT-ATHLETES WITH THE NECESSARY RESOURCES AND SUPPORT TO EXCEL ACADEMICALLY DURING THEIR TIME ON CAMPUS.

- Meet or exceed benchmarks tied to NCAA Graduation Success Rate (GSR), Academic Performance Rate (APR) and annual grade point average (GPA).
- Identify prospective and current at-risk student-athletes and provide a success plan through regular meetings, skill enhancement and communication.
- Continue collaboration and communication between Student-Athlete Support Services and the Academic Advising Unit on campus.
- Maintain our commitment to never compromise the student-athlete concept.
- Foster an environment of collaboration and communication between the Division and the University of Denver community.



ATHLETIC ACHIEVEMENT

G O A L :

DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN COMPETITIVE ATHLETIC PROGRAMS AT THE CONFERENCE AND NATIONAL LEVELS.

- Achieve Director's Cup title by finishing as the Top Division 1-AAA program in the country on an annual basis.
- Finish among top 20 percent of Division I institutions annually in each of our sport programs.
- Qualify and participate in NCAA postseason at national and conference levels in 80 percent of our sport programs.
- Continue the development of Pioneer Health & Performance unit to serve our student-athletes.



STUDENT-ATHLETE WELL-BEING

G O A L :

EMBRACE A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO HEALTH, WELLNESS, AND PERFORMANCE FOR OUR STUDENT-ATHLETES.

- Engage in multi-disciplinary research in the areas of health and performance to positively impact student-athletes and collaborate among DU faculty and the top medical providers in the community.
- Enhance the sports medicine facility to allow increased access to high level medical care and to create a recovery center for increased performance.
- Utilize cutting edge technology to provide evidence based practice and enhance preventative medicine through the inter-disciplinary Pioneer Health & Performance team.
- Continue to provide top ranked strength and conditioning resources to increase mind, spirit and body to produce positive long term outcomes.
- Continue to set the industry standard for a holistic approach to Health and Performance.



DIVERSITY | EQUITY | INCLUSION

G O A L :

CREATE A CULTURE IN ATHLETICS AND RECREATION THAT DEMONSTRATES A COMMITMENT TO AND LEADERSHIP IN FOSTERING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY.

- Contribute to the University's "DU IMPACT 2025; Transformative Direction Four: One DU" by becoming a national leader in culture, practices and structures that encourage inclusivity.
- Continue to implement athletic policies regarding the Division's commitment to diversity and gender equity.
- Actively participate in University efforts to increase enrollment for a more diverse student body and student-athletes.
- Provide fundraising efforts to increase scholarships and endowments for minority student-athletes and first generation students.
- Maintain a Division dedicated to creating a culture that recognizes and values common goals and diverse identities while encouraging respect, understanding and appreciation of individuals and group differences.
- Provide educational programs for senior athletic administration, coaches, staff and students.

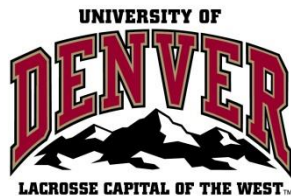


IMAGE AND BRAND

G O A L :

CONTINUE TO POSITION DENVER ATHLETICS IN THE MOST POSITIVE MANNER POSSIBLE, WHILE PROVIDING QUALITY PRODUCTS AND OUTSTANDING “BRAND” RECOGNITION AND MEDIA EXPOSURE FOR THE UNIVERSITY.

- Capitalize on momentum of brand of Denver Athletics, PiONEer Nation, Arch Denver, Pioneer Movement, Lacrosse Capital of the West, etc.
- Promulgate athletic messaging and communications consistent with “DU IMPACT 2025.”
- Increase recognition of our intercollegiate athletic programs and the strength of the University’s brand at the national level and expand our footprint.
- Promote winning culture through brand recognition and awareness locally and regionally while leveraging conference affiliations to increase the Denver image.
- Increase outreach and exposure through heightened use of digital and social media platforms, expanding reach by 20 percent annually.
- Successfully communicate all athletics news and activities in order to maximize media coverage of Denver Athletics and its varsity sport programs.
- Encourage involvement through community service programs to ensure student-athletes, coaches and staff connection to the surrounding metro area.



ENGAGEMENT

GOAL :

ADVANCE AND CELEBRATE “ONE DU” THROUGH DIVERSE PROGRAMMING TO INCREASE ATTENDANCE, PARTICIPATION AND REVENUE FOR THE DIVISION.

- Engage students, faculty, alumni and friends through our multi-use facilities with diverse programming and membership opportunities.
- Provide students with a continuum of athletic and recreational opportunities including: Club Sports , Intramural Sports, Coors Fitness Center and Division I Intercollegiate competition.
- Strengthen University of Denver traditions on campus and during athletic events.
- Enhance new media platforms to provoke engagement and increase participation by presenting instant gratification and user friendly technology without compromising personal communication and relationships.
- Bridging gaps among alumni, friends, students, faculty and staff.



CUSTOMER SERVICE

G O A L :

PROVIDE CUSTOMER SERVICE THAT EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS OF FANS AND DONORS.

- Instill a “service above self” attitude rooted in values of teamwork, communication, collaboration and responsibility.
- Demonstrate a “One Division, One DU, One Nation” mentality that together we are better to demonstrate collaboration among units.
- Use data-driven feedback to address areas of customer concern and develop simple solutions for future events to ensure retention.
- Withhold an open minded approach to build comradery among university and community partners to best represent the mission of the University of Denver.



FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

G O A L :

MAXIMIZE REVENUE STREAMS AND MANAGE EXPENSES TO SUPPORT STRATEGIC PRIORITIES.

- Maintain the highest degree of integrity and stewardship that instills trust in our donors.
- Allocate financial resources in pursuit of the mission, vision and goals articulated in the Division's Strategic Plan.
- Leverage "Not Business As Usual" practices to create and enhance partnerships to enhance revenue and manage expenses.
- Continue to increase donations to the Division by at least 10 percent annually while simultaneously ensuring strong donor relations, retention and customer service.
- Enhance resources through donations, corporate sponsorships in collaboration with Denver Sports Properties, Spectra, ticket sales and fundraising events.
- Retain 100 percent staff giving among student-athletes and Division employees in the Division on an annual basis.

