

October 27, 2016

Dear UA Community -

When I selected Intercollegiate Athletics - one of many university departments under review through the Strategic Pathways process - I knew that the appointed review committee would give the Board of Regents and me the options we needed to make our tough decisions. In September, I recommended to the regents that we pursue an NCAA waiver allowing us to continue to have an athletics program in light of the significant budget reductions that have occurred in the State of Alaska and the UA System, and the regents concurred.

I want to let you know that the waiver applications were filed by UAF and UAA with the NCAA Membership Committee on Oct.19. The applications ask the NCAA to waive the criteria it requires for its Division II membership and allow us to reduce the number of athletic teams at UAF from 10 to 8 and at UAA from 13 to 9.

The teams to be cut from the UAA athletic roster include men's and women's skiing and men's and women's indoor track. At UAF, the request is to eliminate men's/women's skiing. These reductions will have an impact on about 95 of our finest athletes, the dedicated staffs who coach them and will contribute approximately \$1.25 million toward the total budgetary reduction for athletics. The decision about which teams is subject also to Board of Regents' approval.

The NCAA Membership Committee will meet in early November to consider our request, and we hope to hear back quickly. We're told that we'll either get a thumbs up or down, or that the committee may have additional questions for us.

These are hard decisions and not the ones I look forward to making. I love everything about the competitive nature of sports, I respect the men and women who compete as a Nanook or a Seawolf. I thank them for their leadership and their sportsman-like conduct, and I can promise that we will do everything we can to ease the transition we all will face.

Sincerely,
Jim Johnsen