I. MISSION

The mission of NKU Athletics is to advance the University’s vision while focusing on the well-being of our student-athletes as we prepare and empower each of them for academic and competitive success at NKU and beyond. We are committed to serving and engaging the University and local community while preserving and establishing meaningful and enduring relationships with alumni, friends and fans. We will do so with uncompromising integrity and sportsmanship exceeding the guidance provided by the National Collegiate Athletics Association and Horizon League.

II. VISION

NKU Athletics will embody comprehensive excellence. We will adhere to and excel in each of our core values while fostering an environment that promotes continuous learning, engagement, and fiscal responsibility.

CORE VALUES

**Integrity**
We will instill integrity in our student-athletes, coaches and staff by conducting ourselves in an honest and trustworthy manor.

**Student-Athlete Well-Being**
We will make decisions to protect and enhance the physical and educational experience of our student-athletes.

**Excellence**
We will provide our student-athletes, coaches and staff the resources necessary to successfully compete academically and athletically.

**Inclusiveness**
We value diversity and embrace the perspectives and contributions of each individual.

**University Engagement**
We will ingrain ourselves in the fabric of University life.

**Community Interaction**
We recognize there is great responsibility and pride in representing NKU by being actively involved in our community.
III. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

INTEGRITY, ACCOUNTABILITY & COMPLIANCE

GOAL: Student-athletes, coaches and staff will exhibit high standards regarding academic integrity, sportsmanship and personal behavior

Objective 1: Foster a team environment that optimizes personnel, resources and is organizationally efficient

Action 1.01 Update department organizational structure and individual job descriptions and the organizational chart

Action 1.02 Implement a personal development plan that encourages personal growth, accountability and performance excellence

Action 1.03 Improve departmental operations and procedures with appropriate internal controls

Objective 2: Foster an environment of accountability and continuous learning

Action 2.01 Include mission, vision and values along with measurable expectations as part of programmatic expectations for each sport

Action 2.02 Set goals for both administrative and coaching staffs

Action 2.03 Emphasize and fund the importance of professional development and self-improvement

Objective 3: Comply with Federal, State, NCAA, Conference and University rule and regulations

Action 3.01 Complete an annual review of compliance policies and procedures to identify areas for improvement

Action 3.02 Provide NCAA rules education for internal and external constituents through a variety of formats

Action 3.03 Develop a Statement of Expectations for student-athletes and employees consistent with University policies

Action 3.04 Maintain strong relationships and open communication with other campus entities including, but not limited to, the Office of the Registrar, Admissions, Financial Aid, Student Life and Athletics Advisory Council to ensure appropriate checks and balances exist
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

GOAL: Empower student-athletes to complete their academic careers at the highest level possible.

Objective 1: Graduate student-athletes at a rate higher than the general student body while achieving a graduation success rate at or above the national average for Division I institutions
Action 1.01 Recruit students who are academically prepared to be successful at the NCAA Division I level
Action 1.02 Provide support services for: advising, tutoring, mentoring, supervised study and life skills development
Action 1.03 Implement a comprehensive feedback system for academic support

Objective 2: All teams should have an Academic Progress Rate (APR) above 950
Action 2.01 Each team will have an APR goal which will be communicated through yearly review of head coach expectations
Action 2.02 If a team falls below expectations an improvement plan will be put in place
Action 2.03 Review APR status with compliance each year

Objective 3: All teams should achieve an overall Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.00 or better each semester
Action 3.01 Each team will have a GPA goal which will be communicated through yearly review of head coach expectations
Action 3.02 If a team falls below expectations an improvement plan will be put in place
Action 3.03 Review GPA status with compliance each year

Objective 4: Recognize and celebrate individual and team academic achievement to all constituencies
Action 4.01 Continue to improve academic awards banquet
Action 4.02 Increase awareness through website and social media platforms
STUDENT-ATHLETE WELL-BEING

GOAL: Provide the necessary resources and support for student-athletes to reach their potential physically and mentally.

Objective 1: Promote and support the health and well-being of all student-athletes

Action 1.01 Provide access to comprehensive medical and counseling services for student-athletes

Action 1.02 Expand educational programs and services in nutrition and personal health

Action 1.03 Provide healthy and safe practice, competition and travel environments

Action 1.04 Support the academic and personal well-being of student-athletes through sports scheduling

Action 1.05 Provide equitable access to strength training facilities

Action 1.06 Review all healthcare and safety policies each year

Objective 2: Provide tools that support student-athletes’ preparation for leadership and career success

Action 2.01 Enhance our delivery of life skills programs

Action 2.02 Develop a career planning process

Action 2.03 Expand collaboration with campus through increased involvement with the campus career center and mentoring programs

Action 2.04 Implement faculty mentor program

Objective 3: Make NKU Athletics a welcoming and supporting environment for all student-athletes

Action 3.01 Distribute, analyze and act on data from annual student-athlete questionnaire results

Action 3.02 Conduct yearly review of gender and diversity plans with Athletic Council

Action 3.03 Ensure Student-Athlete Advisory Council (SAAC) is comfortable in expressing the needs of our most important voice – our student-athletes
Objective 4: Provide a safe environment free from harassment and discrimination

Action 4.01 Foster relationships with other campus offices to assist with retention and recruitment of minority student-athletes and staff

Action 4.02 Work with university faculty and staff to identify and develop mentoring opportunities

Action 4.03 Develop leadership roles within SAAC and other committee opportunities that promote inclusiveness

Action 4.04 Support University violence protection and harassment initiatives (Green Dot)
COMPETITIVE EXCELLENCE

GOAL: Field competitive teams both in conference and nationally

Objective 1: Qualify each team for post-season competition and NCAA Championships, with expectations identified for each program

Action 1.01 Provide a comprehensive year-round training program for all teams

Action 1.02 Recruit student-athletes who after meeting our academic standards can compete successfully at the Division I level

Action 1.03 Win more conference championships than any other conference member

Action 1.04 Schedule athletic competitions to achieve program expectations while aligning with our overall goals

Objective 2: Provide each team scholarship allocations commensurate with NCAA and conference regulations

Action 2.01 List maximum number of scholarships for each sport

Action 2.02 Develop fundraising strategies centered around scholarship support

Objective 3: Provide the NCAA maximum number of allowable coaches and appropriate support staff to be effective and efficient

Action 3.01 List maximum number of coaches/support staff for each sport

Action 3.02 Develop fundraising strategies to be able to hire new coaches and/or staff

Objective 4: Hire and retain the coaches and staff who embrace and exemplify the core values of NKU Athletics

Action 4.01 Create and fund opportunities for professional development

Action 4.02 Annually review and discuss program expectations

Action 4.03 Work within university guidelines to adjust pay for superior coaches
**Objective 5:** Improve and maintain competition, training and support facilities to provide a quality environment for student-athletes

**Action 5.01** See *Facility Enhancement*

**Objective 6:** Provide equipment, supplies, sports medicine support, game environment and administrative staff support for competitive success

**Action 6.01** Develop an annual plan to address any needs related to equipment, supplies, sports medicine, etc.

**Action 6.02** Meet yearly with each head coach to discuss challenges and opportunities within his/her program
FACILITY ENHANCEMENT

GOAL: Create an athletics facilities master plan that supports each of our sports teams while enhancing the student-athlete and fan experience

Objective 1: Address immediate facilities needs
Action 1.01 Perform comprehensive reviews of maintenance and expansion needs on an annual basis for each venue
Action 1.02 Develop facility upgrade and operational budget
Action 1.03 Provide adequate locker room space for all sport programs on campus

Objective 2: Develop comprehensive long term facility upgrade and maintenance plans
Action 2.01 Identify needs related to new, expanded or upgraded facilities
Action 2.02 Develop a financial model that meets the goals of the strategic plan for facilities

Objective 3: Consider the fan experience in all future facility enhancements
Action 3.01 Distribute, analyze and act on data from fan experience surveys
Action 3.02 Utilize Fan Advisory Council for feedback throughout the year
Action 3.03 Monitor customer service as both a mechanism to improve interaction with our customers and receive feedback for potential areas of improvement
CAMPUSS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

GOAL: Engage the campus and community in partnerships to better connect the department to our constituents

Objective 1: Foster a culture of outreach and community service that is embraced by student-athletes, coaches and staff

Action 1.01 Enlist student-athletes, coaches and staff to participate in various campus initiatives and committees
Action 1.02 Develop a process to track all service activities
Action 1.03 Volunteer at least 2,500 hours as a department
Action 1.04 Cross-promote other programs and University elements during breaks in the game action

Objective 2: We will use consistent communication to inspire and inform our supporters, instill pride, and provide a clear call to action in support of our vision.

Action 2.01 Provide a quarterly newsletter to all Go Norse Fund supporters to communicate our athletic success and our involvement in our community
Action 2.02 Utilize our website to communicate our athletic success and connect our student-athletes with the university community and our region
Action 2.03 Create partnership opportunities that also benefit local city, county and state entities
Action 2.04 Recognize staff/programs for community/charity involvement

Objective 3: Increase faculty, staff and student attendance at athletic events

Action 3.01 Offer special faculty/staff pricing for season tickets
Action 3.02 Create Norse Force (student organization) benefits that encourage regular attendance at sporting events
Action 3.03 Strengthen partnership with Learfield and Norse Force to offer more opportunities for student engagement during events on campus
RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT & FISCAL MANAGEMENT

**GOAL:** Provide adequate financial resources to enable our teams to compete and win championships

**Objective 1:** Maximize all revenue streams

Action 1.01 Increase Go Norse Fund support to fund department priorities, capital projects and other programmatic needs through expanding our prospect pool at an annual fund and major gift level

Action 1.02 Set goals for administrative staff in revenue generating areas

Action 1.03 Leverage new Ticketmaster (Arctics) software to increase ticket sales by identifying new revenue sources to ensure financial stability and growth

Action 1.04 Identify specific priorities, along with Learfield, for revenue generating opportunities

Action 1.05 Maximize revenue generating opportunities through our association with the Horizon League

Action 1.06 Maximize revenue through our association with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)

**Objective 2:** Responsibly provide and manage the resources necessary to meet the goals of the NKU athletics program while maintaining fiscal stability

Action 2.01 Implement three-year budget projections that maintain fiscal stability and reflect both annual and long-term departmental goals

Action 2.02 Increase athletics department revenues to align with three-year annual budget projections

**Objective 3:** Exercise stewardship of departmental expenses to achieve efficiency and effectiveness

Action 3.01 Establish procedures to achieve high-quality stewardship of departmental expenses

Action 3.02 Be transparent in methods of reporting financial data
INCREASE BRAND AWARENESS & INSTITUTIONAL REPUTATION

GOAL: Build a positive image for NKU that is consistent, recognizable and respected

Objective 1: Position NKU to gain positive regional and national recognition that is consistent, distinctive and in alignment with our mission and vision, as well as the mission and vision of the University

Action 1.01 Schedule a minimum of two men’s basketball games per season against nationally known opponent

Action 1.02 Increase outreach through various social media opportunities to gain additional exposure and number of followers

Action 1.03 Define, manage and control usage of NKU brand images to represent the University in a positive and consistent manner

Action 1.04 Better utilize resources to engage and interact with fans (web, videos, television, radio, etc.)

Objective 2: Increase average annual attendance at each of our athletic events

Action 2.01 Define overall attendance figures with a goal of at least a 10% increase each year

Action 2.02 Review fan experience surveys and feedback from the Fan Advisory Council annually

Objective 3: Increase presence of NKU merchandise in off-campus retail stores

Action 3.01 Develop an intentional strategy to grow our base of support locally through merchandise sales

Action 3.02 Work closely with University Marketing/Communications and SMA (Learfield) to get more NKU merchandise in local retail stores

Action 3.02 Annual licensing review

Objective 4: Increase amount of home games we televise or live stream each year

Action 4.01 Annual review of number of contests televised or streamed

Action 4.02 Annual review of television/streaming capabilities within each venue along with needed technology upgrades