

As you know, yesterday we announced that the University is suspending our Men's and Women's Swimming and Diving programs for five years. We felt it program have represented WKU with distinction, the overall findings of a consistent pattern of misconduct by team members is troubling and not acceptable at WKU.

The decision comes after an investigation into complaints brought by a former swim team member. The investigation by the Bowling Green Police Department and WKU's Title IX Coordinator Huda Melky found evidence of multiple violations of WKU's Student Code of Conduct, Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Title IX Sexual Misconduct/Assault Policy, including hazing, forced alcohol consumption, and physical and emotional abuse. The Office of Student Judicial Affairs will handle matters related to the alleged violations of the student code of conduct in accordance with the University's Student Judicial Process, and those decisions will remain confidential. Our action to suspend the program addresses the Title IX violations and the personnel issues.

What makes this action particularly difficult is the rich history of these programs and the exemplary manner in which our Men's and Women's Swimming and Diving teams have performed in the classroom and in the pool. Nine members of these teams were just named to the Conference USA Commissioner's Medal for the 2014-15 academic year. These medals are given to Conference USA student-athletes who have achieved a cumulative GPA of 3.75 or better. Thirty-four members of these two teams were just named to the Conference USA Commissioner's Honor Roll for this year, which means they have achieved a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better. The men won a Conference USA Swimming and Diving Championship this year, and the women finished second. They have represented WKU with distinction in the classroom and in competition, but sadly their collective behavior outside of the classroom and the pool merits this serious disciplinary action.

When students choose to participate in a formally recognized WKU organization, regardless of the nature of that organization, they become responsible for their actions, both as individuals and as a group. WKU simply will not tolerate indecent, immoral, physical, or mental acts of disrespect or abuse among our students. We must all embrace a culture where every student is as important as any student. When this culture is not embraced, we will act swiftly and firmly to ensure that the dignity and integrity of the institution is sustained.

Current student-athletes in the program will be allowed to transfer immediately if they desire, and if they choose to remain a student at WKU, their current scholarships will be honored through their senior year provided they remain in good academic and university standing. Our athletic academic advising staff will

continue to work with team members who choose to stay at WKU and support their progression toward their degree. Additionally, we are communicating with each recruit who had committed to WKU for the 2015-16 year and are directly assisting them in every way.

We realize this action is disappointing for all of you and has an adverse impact on many others. No one feels good about that. Our hope is through the passage of time this pervasive culture will be eliminated and this difficult situation can be overcome.

We appreciate that many of you may have questions and concerns, however, due to the nature of the investigation and the seriousness of the allegations, we cannot comment any further.

Respectfully,

Gary Ransdell, President

Todd Stewart, Athletic Director