

**The University of Louisiana at  
Monroe  
Department of Athletics  
Strategic Plan**



**At the Tipping Point**

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## **Introduction and Background**

“Tipping point, crossroads, promising, improving, heading in the right direction, on the way up.” Those were typical comments in surveys that were a part of this planning process. The University of Louisiana at Monroe’s athletics program finds itself at a pivotal point in its history just as the entire university does. Many things have happened in the last few years to bring the university and its athletic program to this point. Now is the time for the athletic program to seize on its opportunity to accelerate its progress and reach new levels.

With approximately \$70 million in planned and completed facility upgrades and steady enrollment in each of the previous three years, The University of Louisiana at Monroe is experiencing a renaissance and athletics is part of that resurgence. Both the University and the athletic department experienced a difficult period that spanned the latter 1990s and early 2000s but recent advances indicate that is now changing. Exciting times are on the bayou campus again. Much progress is being made in academics, facilities and student activities. Academic quality and student satisfaction measures have seen marked improvements. An extraordinary amount of construction has been completed on campus transforming the look of the campus and the functionality as well. Enrollment has been on the rise again and the perception of the University has again reached new heights.

The overall university has gone through a strategic planning process which addressed certain aspects of athletics including a review of what classification it should maintain and what conference with which it should affiliate. As a result, ULM reaffirmed its commitment to NCAA Division 1 athletics. Interviews of the University cabinet, as well as input from the overall university planning process, confirmed a strong commitment to the participation in intercollegiate athletics at the Division I level for all sports while also reaffirming its position among Division IA football programs. There was virtually 100% agreement on the importance of competing at this level to the overall plan for ULM. As a result, ULM is committed to adherence to NCAA rules concerning IA requirements including sports sponsorship, scheduling, home football game attendance, and awarding of financial aid.

This commitment led to possibly the most significant change that has taken place in ULM athletics. A decision was made to join the Sun Belt Conference as a full member. Membership in the Sun Belt Conference is a significant strength. The Sun Belt Conference is becoming increasingly recognized and prominent. The tie-in with the New Orleans Bowl gives the conference teams a chance to share in bowl revenues and the goal of playing in a post-season bowl game. The Sun Belt Conference sponsors championships in 19 sports including all 16 sports in which ULM competes.

Other positive things have happened in athletics as well. The deficit has been erased and athletics has generated a positive operating income for the last four years. Significant improvements have been made to athletic facilities over the last few years including

major upgrades to the softball complex with private funds, the resurfacing of the track, the resurfacing of the tennis courts, the renovation of the strength and training room, the renovation of the stadium lobby, the renovation of the skybox in the stadium, and improvements to the baseball field and stadium. Currently, the school is resurfacing the basketball floor and building a new soccer field. Season ticket sales for football have increased as well as attendance at the games. In 2003, ULM entered a contract with the University of Arkansas for a designated home game in Little Rock every other year through 2012, thereby helping to satisfy the new NCAA attendance requirements. Students recently approved an athletics student fee to support athletic costs.

There has been some recent success in the competitive arena as well. The baseball team won a share of the Southland Conference regular season championship in 2002. One of the ULM men's basketball players became the all-time NCAA shot block leader in 2002. The women's tennis program won the Southland Conference championship and went to the NCAA tournament in 2003. The men's golf program went to the NCAA tournament in 2004. The women's basketball team tied for the Southland Conference regular season championship in 2005. ULM volleyball had more wins in the 2005 season than in any year since 1990. Women's golf won a tournament in their first year of competition in 2006. Possibly the single biggest success was the Sun Belt co-championship earned by the football team in 2005. This was the first conference championship for football since 1992.

Other important decisions have been made in addition to classification and the new conference affiliation which makes the timing perfect to take a new look at the planning of the ULM athletic program. Changes have been made in the sports sponsored by the University. ULM analyzed the sports that it sponsors and realigned them to more appropriately match the interest of the constituencies and competitive opportunities. Improvements were also made in the equity of women's athletics by adding women's golf. Women's golf was identified in the University's overall planning process as a potential new sport to take advantage of the local interest in golf and assist in continuing efforts to meet Title IX requirements. ULM now sponsors 16 sports at Division I including IA football. There are nine women's sports and seven men's sports. All 16 sports have conference championships sponsored by the Sun Belt. The athletics program went through a review process directed by the Louisiana System Board of Supervisors and conducted by Carr Sports Associates, Inc., which set the foundation for this strategic planning process.

As stated in its policies, "the Louisiana Board of Regents recognizes the benefits derived by various institutional constituencies from a well managed and competitive intercollegiate athletic program. Maintaining such a program can enhance student educational experiences and contribute to a broader education environment." While ULM has made a great deal of progress, success in its athletic operations will be challenging; but most things of importance and consequence are. Athletics is the most visible aspect of the university and has a tremendous impact on the public impression of the institution. It serves as the front porch of the university and is the major marketing arm of the school. Its impact goes beyond just athletics and provides cultural advances

ranging from the marching band to the Homecoming court. It impacts the quality of student life as well as recruiting of potential students. It completes the total experience for the student body. It has a positive impact on the northeast Louisiana economy.

Success will require strong leadership and community support, including the cities of Monroe and West Monroe and Ouachita Parish. While community support has been important in the past, it is vital now. ULM must comply with stringent NCAA rules, adhere to conference guidelines and do so within constrained budgets. There are many obstacles to overcome as with any University athletic program but the rewards will also be great.

ULM has great history and tradition in its athletic program with many conference championships and NCAA tournament appearances. This plan seeks to build on that history and tradition and continue moving forward. The University and its athletic program have many challenges ahead but both are poised for success. The opportunity is there. As one person said in an interview, "Success in athletics makes the whole campus and community feel better." Yes, you could say it's a tipping point.

## **ULM Athletics Tradition**

The University of Louisiana at Monroe began a new era in athletics this year when it became a full-fledged member of the Sun Belt Conference on July 1 after competing in the league in football only for the past five seasons. ULM brings a rich tradition of success in numerous sports and at various levels of competition to the Sun Belt.

ULM began in 1931 as a junior college and won a national championship at that level before becoming a four-year institution in 1951. The university won another national title in 1987 when it won the NCAA Division I-AA football crown and is the only Louisiana institution to win that championship. ULM moved up to Division IA in 1994, became a football member of the SBC in 2001, and won a share of the conference championship in 2005.

Over the years, ULM has participated in three different conferences before joining the Sun Belt. From 1953 through 1971, the university was a part of the Gulf States Conference, from 1978 until 1982 was a member of the Trans-America Athletic Conference and from 1982 until 2006 was a member of the Southland Conference. Since 1958, ULM has won 98 conference regular season or tournament titles. In addition, numerous student athletes have earned recognition as All-Conference, All-Region and All-American performers as well as received academic awards. The student athletes of ULM have traditionally graduated at a rate higher than the general student population.

In basketball, ULM has gone to the NCAA Final Four in women's basketball, has participated in the NCAA men's tournament seven times and was the first Louisiana school besides LSU to go to the NIT. The university has produced a long line of NCAA champions and world record holders in men's and women's track, went to the national baseball finals as a college division member and has played in four NCAA regional tournaments as a division I member. ULM tennis teams have won numerous conference

titles and national rankings. ULM's overall success in athletics is best illustrated by the fact that during the university's 24 years in the Southland Conference, it won more men's all-sports titles than any other school with eight and the second most women's all-sports crowns with five. ULM also won the second highest number of team championships during its years as a member of the Southland Conference, including the most crowns in football and men's basketball.

## **Process and Purpose**

In the spring of 2006, this process was initiated. The purposes of the process are to establish a framework and guide to move the ULM athletic program forward, provide a general framework for future decisions and actions, and to seize upon the opportunity that exists at this time to build on the outstanding progress occurring across the University as a whole. A concerted effort has been made to align the strategic plan for the athletic department with the strategic plan of the University and to ensure its consistency with the University's overall vision and mission. Consequently, the starting point for this planning process was the University's strategic plan. From there, a thorough review was conducted of a number of prior documents, surveys, and reports – both internally and externally. (See Appendix A for a complete list.) New surveys and discussions were held with the University Cabinet as well as virtually all of the Athletics Department personnel. Input has also been obtained from various other individuals – both internal and external to the University. This process has allowed the input from all constituencies of the University into the resulting plan.

## **The University of Louisiana at Monroe Vision Statement**

Within the decade, The University of Louisiana at Monroe will be recognized as a preeminent student-centered university with learning as its primary goal.

## **The University of Louisiana at Monroe Mission Statement**

The University of Louisiana at Monroe (ULM) is a selective admissions, comprehensive senior institution of higher education. It offers high quality academic and professional programs to meet the intellectual, cultural, vocational, social, and personal needs of its students. The University offers both traditional and innovative graduate and undergraduate programs in the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business Administration, Education and Human Development, and Health Sciences.

ULM's mission is to serve its students and community through teaching, research, and service. On a dynamic and diverse campus that is technologically modern and conducive to learning, students are nurtured and encouraged to broaden their values, intellect, interests, talents, and abilities to become thoughtful and productive citizens. ULM also recognizes its responsibility as a community leader and is committed to improving the general quality of life through pure and applied research, clinics, teacher education, and partnerships. A major center for the health sciences, the University provides the public

with valuable health care resources. Recreational opportunities are offered through intramural and intercollegiate athletic programs.

Learning is ULM's main focus. Faculty and staff are committed to offering a complete educational experience. ULM's goal is to produce graduates who will be successful in their chosen fields by promoting excellence in education and stressing social responsibility and individual accountability.

The University serves its students and the community by sponsoring quality research programs and creative activities that promote learning and improve the quality of life. This research includes, but is not limited to, public and scholarly presentations and publications on every level. Such activities give the University a competitive advantage, and each academic department is challenged to be actively engaged in research. Extramural funding and grant writing are valuable kinds of scholarly activity, and ULM supports faculty efforts in securing such research funds.

ULM also serves the community by sharing its expertise and facilities with the public. The region's quality of life is improved through University partnerships and internships with other academic institutions and with both public and private entities. Through its physical and academic resources, ULM serves as a cultural center to promote the area's unique arts, archaeology, history, folk life, and natural sciences.

## **The University of Louisiana at Monroe Athletics Vision Statement**

The Department of Athletics at The University of Louisiana at Monroe aspires to be the model student-centered Division IA athletic program that balances the goals of academic success and excellence in competition while setting the standards for ethical behavior and fiscal responsibility.

## **The University of Louisiana at Monroe Athletics Mission Statement**

ULM athletics is inextricably tied to the educational aspirations and academic progress of The University of Louisiana at Monroe, to the aspirations of its faculty and staff, and to the needs and general welfare of its student body, including its student athletes, as we share a common vision with a focus on the complete student-centered educational experience along with a common set of values. In all of its activities, the Department will conduct itself in compliance with the NCAA, Sun Belt Conference and University rules and insist on integrity, ethical conduct and accountability, and we believe that institutional control of athletics is both necessary and appropriate to assure compliance with rules and regulations.

The purpose of ULM Athletics is to further the University's mission by broadening the variety of educational experiences available to students; enlivening, and enriching the life of our academic community; fostering enthusiasm, pride, ownership and loyalty among students, alumni and community; and, serving as a constant public presence for the

university's image. We will do this by offering nationally competitive Division I intercollegiate athletic programs, including Division IA football, that reflect the interest of our students and faculty, the Sun Belt Conference, our alumni and our community of supporters. Athletics is a proper part of the educational mission of the University and, inherently, provides student-athletes with the opportunity to obtain a quality well-rounded education while pursuing their dreams of competing in their chosen sport.

We will provide a caring environment for living and learning characterized by close relationships, a family atmosphere, physical and emotional well-being, appreciation of diversity, affirmation of equal opportunity and academic freedom, and respect for the dignity and worth of each individual. We are dedicated to maximizing the educational and competitive impact of our available resources including human, community, facility and financial. ULM's intercollegiate athletics program is fully committed to complying with the principle of gender equity as articulated in Title IX.

We will promote excellence in academics, competition, ethical behavior, sportsmanship and integrity. We will provide opportunities and support for our student-athletes to achieve this excellence. We recognize that the University's obligation to the State of Louisiana and to the parents everywhere who send us their sons and daughters is to provide a quality and complete educational experience that leads to the graduation of our students prepared for recognized achievement, success in their chosen fields and meaningful lives and careers. We are committed to the proposition that academic achievement is not and should not be a gift. Rather, it is a challenge that must be met by the individual students, as well as the University.

Accordingly, all of our efforts are guided by certain values we believe essential to the fulfillment of this mission.

## **The University of Louisiana at Monroe Athletics Core Values**

### **1. Excellence**

Excellence reflects personal expectations and regional, national, and global standards. It is pursued through diligent individual and collective efforts and is achieved by setting the highest goals possible for each individual and team and not resting until those goals are attained. It is reflected in the performance of our student-athletes (in academics and in athletic competition), teams and employees as well as the fiscal soundness of our programs. Individually and collectively we strive always to give our all and thereby realize our best possibilities.

### **2. Scholarship**

Scholarship includes original research, the development of new interpretations, applying knowledge to solve problems, and the sharing of knowledge through teaching. We believe scholarship defines a university's intellectual climate and culture. Students and faculty are encouraged to follow ULM's motto, "Seek the Truth," through scholarly activities. In athletics, we confirm that the primary objective of our student-athletes is

first and foremost to obtain a degree. Our primary purpose is to promote the personal growth and physical well being of our student athletes, to guide them to become in life the best they can be. It is our abiding goal to foster the ideals, standards and value system that enable them to grow spiritually, emotionally and intellectually, and to attain degrees in their chosen field of endeavor. We are committed to the idea that intercollegiate athletics prepares student-athletes for life by serving as an integral part of the undergraduate experience.

### **3. Diversity**

Diversity in academic programs, traditions, experiences, perspectives, opinions, ethnicity, and culture enriches and unifies a university. We celebrate uniqueness in our students, faculty, and staff because diversity expands the opportunity for learning. In athletics, we will foster an environment in which all students, potential students, employees and potential employees have equal opportunity and encouragement to excel academically and athletically. We are committed to pursue the common good through an inclusive and cooperative leadership culture that fosters equitable participation for student-athletes and career opportunities for coaches and administrators from diverse backgrounds.

### **4. Responsibility**

Responsibility includes acting morally and ethically, as well as being accountable for one's actions. Students, faculty, and staff have a duty to act with these standards in mind. We also recognize our duty to be thoughtful stewards of those resources entrusted to us. We are dedicated to developing the character of our students. By their very nature, athletics inevitably involve character development. For this reason, especially, we must conduct ourselves with utmost integrity. All our programs, and the activities on our behalf by alumni and friends, must be consistent with the policies of the University and the athletic bodies that govern us. We are to be, at all times, honest and forthright in our dealings with each other, the public, and the media. A major part of responsibility and integrity in sports involves good sportsmanship.

### **5. Teamwork**

In addition to the four values adopted by the University as a whole, the athletics department is also guided by and dedicated to the additional value of teamwork. If there is one concept that drives us, it is our dedication, in the broadest possible sense, to winning. We compete to win as individuals, as team members and as representatives of the University. We clearly understand that the success of any one person is always the result of dedicated effort on the part of many people. So, while we are quick to recognize individual performance, we are even quicker to celebrate achievements of the team.

## **Constituencies**

ULM athletics recognizes that it serves several different constituencies and is committed to serving the needs of each of the groups. Many distinct groups comprise the University's family, and each group plays a crucial role. As our mission says, our athletic programs will serve as a source of enthusiasm and loyalty. They will enliven and enrich the life of our academic community; they will keep our graduates in touch with the University long after they leave campus; and they will serve as a common rallying point

for all the constituents of the University.

## **1. Students**

*Students* are the focus of the University and include part-time, full-time, traditional, and nontraditional types. We consider both prospective and current students essential constituencies. The student body is diverse, being composed of both genders, as well as people of different race, ethnic background, and nationality. The athletic department recognizes that it has additional responsibilities to the specific group of students who participate in the 16 NCAA Division I sports sponsored by the university.

## **2. Faculty**

*Faculty* forge the University's intellectual identity. Their talent, knowledge, and expertise offer successive generations of students the opportunity to succeed academically and the challenge to grow in personal and social ways. The athletic department recognizes its unique and multi faceted relationship with the faculty of the university. First and foremost is the relationship of student and teacher. Second the faculty represents part of the fan base and boosters of the athletic teams. Finally, the faculty represents co-workers with the athletic department personnel as they both seek to offer the complete educational experience to the entire student body. The Faculty Athletic Council serves as an important subset of the faculty as they work especially close with the athletic department to ensure the operations of the athletic department serve the university appropriately and that the academic integrity of the student-athletes is maintained and served. As the Louisiana Board of Regents has indicated, maintaining such a program can enhance student educational experiences and contribute to a broader education environment.

## **3. Staff**

*Staff* provide and maintain the institution's vitality in terms of its processes and its service to the students, faculty, and community. The coaches of the Department of Athletics represent a critical component to achieving the goals stated in this plan. Without outstanding coaches, success simply cannot be achieved. While the athletic department is a part of the staff of the University, there are a great number of other staff members that support the athletic department as well as the rest of the university. Additionally, the activities of the athletic department serve to enhance the working environment of the entire university employee base. One of the unique characteristics of working at ULM is the strong feeling of family.

## **4. Alumni**

*Alumni* provide the continuity and connections between successive generations of ULM graduates as they create a strong presence in the larger community. Athletics is the most visible aspect of the university and has a tremendous impact on the public impression of the institution. It helps to keep our alumni in touch with their university. Additionally, the Letterman's Club represents a specific group of alumni that share a common bond and experience from their days at the university as student-athletes.

## **5. Community**

*Community* members have a significant stake in the institution given the University's economic impact upon the region's well-being. ULM's growth and welfare have a profound significance for the service region, not only for economic reasons but also for the cultural, academic, and intellectual development the University makes possible. Athletics is a significant part of this impact on the community – both from an economic standpoint and from a cultural one. The region would be significantly different without the athletic programs of the university.

## **6. Supporters**

*Supporters* are those who may live near or far but who have an attachment to the institution and a sense of its mission. They may benefit from the University directly, or they may sense the importance of the institution to the larger community. Supporters use ULM's facilities, attend its events, and follow its programs. Again, athletics both depends on the university's supporters for its existence and gives back to the supporters through its events and teams. The organized area of this support can be seen through the efforts of the University Foundation and the ULM Athletic Foundation.

## **7. Employers**

*Employers* can meet their hiring needs because the University provides a renewable source of qualified, educated professionals for the workplace. Athletics has both a direct and indirect impact on the employers of the region. It has a direct impact by helping to attract students to the university and providing them with a more complete educational experience and an indirect impact by providing a positive influence on the living conditions of the area, thereby, making it more desirable for ULM graduates and graduates of other universities to want to live in the region. It also provides an opportunity for businesses to advertise their products and services which can be seen through the sponsors of the University's athletic programs.

## **Challenges**

In the data gathering and analysis stages of this process, several key challenges to the progress and success of the University's athletic program became evident or were a common theme. These included:

- the need for increased funding to maintain competitiveness, to continue to move the program forward, and to cover increased costs including tuition, housing, salaries and travel;
- increasing the overall salary levels of the athletic department as the ULM athletic department salaries averaged 83% of the Sun Belt median for the same position in the Division IA 2005 Salary Survey;
- increasing the level of staffing in certain areas to be able to achieve the goals established and not have employee burnout;
- establishing a master facility plan including a structured maintenance program;
- increasing the level of academic assistance for the student-athletes;
- fully developing the marketing and fund raising efforts of the University's athletic program;

- increasing the engagement of the community and alumni in both fundraising efforts and attendance at the games;
- continuing to rekindle the pride and reach deeper into the student body, faculty, staff, community and alumni base;
- developing and promoting a clear and marketable brand image;
- increasing name recognition and getting our positive information out to the market;
- capturing market share for sports viewership and active participation within a market that includes a number of options for the constituencies;
- overcoming the perception of the program based on past difficulties as a low budget, small program;
- continuing to build a strong relationship between academics and athletics;
- maximizing revenue streams so as to avoid the potential to become over-reliant on guarantee games for funding;
- improving the overall record of many of the teams; and
- avoiding the potential to accept the status quo.

It is necessary to acknowledge these challenges very quickly and to present the challenges as opportunities that will spark action. In fact, many of the strategic initiatives are intended to meet these challenges.

### **Comparative Advantages/Strengths**

On the positive side, several key and distinct advantages were also identified or were brought forth as common themes during the process. These included:

- faculty providing exceptionally high quality instruction;
- strong and committed coaching personnel and departmental staff;
- low student/faculty ratio allowing individualized instruction;
- location in a reasonably safe, moderate-sized urban location presenting students with opportunities for employment, cultural activities, and social life as well as presenting the University with opportunities for business and corporate ties, internships, and other forms of mutual support;
- recognized areas of program excellence and distinction that include, but are not limited to, allied health sciences, teacher education, and gerontology;
- administrative philosophy of leadership, student engagement, and sound management;
- past history and tradition of success among teams, individual student-athletes and coaches;
- strong feeling of family within the department staff and student-athletes, including caring, closeness of relationships, cooperation and support;
- recent improvements in campus facilities and beautiful university setting on the bayou;
- strong administrative leadership, support and involvement in all areas of student life including athletics;
- school enrollment being of a size which allows students including student-athletes many opportunities for activities without feeling lost or being a number;

- strong focus of the department on student-athlete welfare given the resources;
- strong focus on fiscal responsibility and doing the most with the available resources leading to athletics department being more efficient with its funds and resources;
- moving all sports to the Sun Belt Conference; and,
- well positioned to offer great student experience along with affordable family oriented entertainment.

Just as the challenges have impacted the strategic themes so have the strengths and advantages. Many of the strategic themes have been designed to build on the identified strengths and advantages.

## **Strategic Themes**

The University of Louisiana at Monroe's athletic department seeks to further the University's mission and to build on the strategic themes identified in the University's overall planning process as conducted in 2004. Accordingly, the first four themes of this plan come from the University's planning process. The theme of "Developing an Academic Core" is not specifically addressed in the athletic plan as it is more appropriately a function of the academic departments of the institution. "Scheduling" overlaps and impacts the various strategic themes to such a degree that it is discussed separately.

### **1. Centering on Students**

The University of Louisiana at Monroe's primary focus is its students. ULM's students, faculty, and staff constitute a team in which students take primary responsibility for their success, assisted by faculty and staff, and facilitated by a stimulating university environment. The University strives in every way to nurture its students, encouraging them to broaden their values, intellect, interests, talents, and abilities to become thoughtful and productive citizens. Consequently, the athletic department will focus on the needs of its student-athletes as well as serving the needs of the student body as a whole. Students are the very reason for the existence of the University. Accordingly, no single issue is more important to the institution or its athletic department. It therefore makes sense that this would be the first strategic theme in any planning document. As the vision of the athletic department says, we want to be "student-centered" and will maintain a focus on the student-athlete. This theme translates into the following goals:

#### **1.1 Achieve academic excellence**

Just as the student is the very reason for the existence of the University, the academic success of students is the primary reason for the student's attendance at the university. Consequently, the athletic program of ULM will focus on helping its student-athletes achieve academic excellence. The student-athletes at ULM have traditionally graduated at a higher rate than the undergraduate student population as a whole and it is a desire to continue that tradition even as the graduation rates of the overall student population improve. The following steps will be taken to achieve this goal.

##### **1.1.1 Increase the academic support for the student-athletes by:**

- Creating an area devoted to student-athletes in the new Clarke M. Williams

Student Success Center thereby allowing additional help but also keeping the student-athlete fully integrated with the entire student body.

- Continuing counseling and tutoring activities to help produce ongoing improvement among student-athletes in maintaining eligibility and, ultimately, graduating ready for a career.
- Adding an additional academic counselor in the 2006-07 school year.
- Fully implementing the mentoring processes between selected student-athletes and faculty.
- Increasing the structure of the academic support program.
- Increasing the coordination with the Student Success Center.
- Increasing the number and quality of tutors available to the student-athlete.
- Working to increase the number of hours tutors are available to the student-athletes.
- Working to improve the quality and timing of advising to the student athletes.
- Developing a system to identify special needs and at-risk student-athletes and in turn developing special programming to meet their abilities and ensuring that all student-athletes that need it are tested for learning disabilities.
- Continuing to require student-athletes to get approval from the athletic academic advisor as well as their general academic advisor before they can drop/add courses or change their major.

**1.1.2 Improve the system for monitoring attendance and academic progress of our student-athletes by:**

- Working through the Faculty Athletic Council and the Faculty Senate, as appropriate, to improve communication between athletics and academics and develop a better method for getting information on student-athletes attendance and academic progress (grade checks) including finding ways to make the system more proactive and more timely without giving even the appearance of putting pressure on academic integrity.
- Working with the Academic Standards Committee and Faculty Athletic Committee to evaluate the possibility of using the Veteran form or other forms for getting information from the Faculty on a timely basis.
- Establishing department wide penalties for student-athletes that do not attend class, study hall, scheduled tutoring or scheduled counseling without excused absences and/or do not participate in an appropriate manner.
- Having coaches focus on academic success as well as athletic success and including it as a part of their annual evaluation. Teams will be expected to have an Academic Performance Rate as defined by the NCAA equal to or greater than 925 or the target set in the future by the NCAA and a graduation rate that exceeds the student body as a whole. Student athletes as a group will seek to achieve a grade point average higher than that of all undergraduate students at ULM.

**1.1.3 Improve learning opportunities for student-athletes to recognize the additional time constraints they encounter by:**

- Evaluating the registration process for student-athletes to ensure that they can take the courses they need for progress on their degree and have minimal

impact on their practice and playing schedule.

- Improving the utilization of on-line learning opportunities for the student-athletes thereby adding time flexibility.
- Improving our utilization of short term courses and Community College opportunities for the student-athletes to recognize the time requirements of competition.
- Continuing to provide summer school opportunities for student-athletes that need additional credits for progress toward their degrees.
- Continuing to offer student-athletes the opportunity for financial aid after they have exhausted their academic eligibility or if they become unable to compete. This help will be contingent on past performance of the student-athlete in terms of following the department rules and academic performance. It will also be conditioned on their agreeing to work for the aid by helping in some way in the athletic department. Each student-athlete that receives this type of financial aid will have to sign an agreement with the athletic department and will be assigned to a staff member for his or her supervision.

#### **1.1.4 Improve entry level selection of student-athletes by:**

- Coaches continuing to recognize that student-athletes are expected to be students first and taking into account the likelihood of academic success during the recruiting process.
- Coaches and staff setting the expectations concerning academic performance during the recruiting process with potential student athletes.
- Conditioning any incentive pay that a coach may earn upon meeting certain academic performance standards. Each team will be expected to achieve an academic performance rate of 925 or the target set in the future by the NCAA.
- Continuing to have the academic performance of their team as a part of each coach's annual evaluation.

#### **1.1.5 Recognize the achievements of the student-athletes in the academic setting with awards that promote graduation and academic excellence of student-athletes by:**

- Continuing to participate in the Sun Belt Conference academic recognition programs.
- Revamping the internal awards for academic success of student-athletes, adding new awards and recognition. Current academic awards that will be maintained include the George T. Walker Senior Award and the Preston Juvenal Freshman Award.
- Developing a team award program to recognize the academic accomplishments of the team as well as the individual.
- Improving the publicity of these awards both internally and externally.
- Creating areas to display the success of student-athletes in academics.

### **1.2 Take care of the welfare needs of the student-athletes**

Student-athletes face certain demands and pressures that are unique from those faced by other students of the university. They are not more important but simply unique. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the athletic department and the university to recognize and address those unique needs of the student-athlete. The following goals are designed

to do this.

**1.2.1 Educate the student-athlete on expectations of them as representatives of the university by:**

- Preparing a student athlete handbook each year. The handbook will be issued at the beginning of the academic year at a meeting of student athletes where questions can be asked and answered. The hand book will cover such things as athletics mission statement, values, code of conduct, NCAA Division I philosophy statement, academic requirements and eligibility, textbook management, financial aid, summer school and aid after competition complete, campus life, employment activities, banned substances and testing, gambling, policy for impact on scholarships of student-athletes who quit or are dismissed from a team, student-athlete awards, sports medicine, sports information operations, strength and conditioning, CHAMPS/Life Skills program, Team ULM, conference policies, release policy, appeals committee, etc.
- Having a functioning Student Athlete Advisory Committee called Team ULM. The purpose of Team ULM is to help improve the student-athlete experience both on and off the field while in college; to provide a forum for explanations and discussions of NCAA, University, Athletic Department and Team rules and regulations; and, to extend volunteer services to our campus community and the communities of the Twin Cities and region. Student-athlete volunteer efforts in the community encourage interaction between the university and local residents. The outreach program is the liaison between the community and the student-athletes. It provides an avenue by which student-athletes may give back to the community and/or become role models for youth. The Senior Woman Administrator will serve as the advisor to this group and ensure regular meetings and planned activities for the student-athletes.
- Having an active CHAMPS/Life Skills program. The role of the CHAMPS/Life Skills program is to provide an environment that promotes the personal growth and development of student-athletes through a program of academic, personal, and career counseling services. These services operate under the Academic Counselors. Some of the programs throughout the year will include drug awareness, sexual responsibilities, gambling and agents, manners and etiquette, media awareness and sportsmanship.
- Conducting education twice a year concerning alcohol, tobacco and drugs through the sports medicine department.
- Conducting compliance education for the student-athletes during the beginning of the year meeting and through Team ULM.
- Developing freshman orientation activities for student-athletes.

**1.2.2 Provide for the unique needs of the student-athlete by:**

- Establishing a code of conduct for the student-athletes that will be included in the Student-Athlete Handbook. Included in this code of conduct will be the expectation that our student-athletes will be good university citizens thereby bringing positive publicity to the university.
- Ensuring that the student-athletes of ULM get the maximum media coverage that can be obtained for their accomplishments. This will be done through news releases, work with the various media outlets, internal publications,

internet web site, and radio and television broadcasts as possible and appropriate. We will also recognize the student-athlete accomplishments through the awards program of the department.

- Encouraging each coach to have some type of end of year program to recognize the accomplishments of the individual student-athletes and the team as a whole.
- Encouraging the student-athletes to attend the contests of other teams to support their fellow student-athletes as well as attending the other university events to support fellow students and be a part of the university as a whole. A composite schedule will be maintained to accommodate the other activities so that attendance can be maximized with as few conflicts as possible.
- Working to ensure the best housing possible for student athletes given budget constraints. A committee will be established to develop a plan for determining what housing will be provided by athletics for each student-athlete, where he or she will live and for what the athletic department will pay including criteria for the decision. This plan will also address how to do housing assignments and roommates for athletes as well as rules for off campus living and funding. A formal contact in housing will be established to ensure the best coordination possible each semester. Additional funding options will also be explored.
- Compiling team playing schedules to ensure adherence to school policy on missed class time. These proposed schedules will be submitted to the Faculty Athletic Council through the Faculty Athletic Rep for approval.
- Allowing the Student-athletes to participate in the university summer work program as appropriate.
- Continuing to manage the textbook issuance and return for student-athletes on book scholarship through the Academic Counselors.
- Providing complimentary tickets to the student-athletes per the department policy.
- Participating in National Student-Athlete Day to recognize its student-athletes and their contributions.
- Formally adopting a written plan for sporting behavior and ethical conduct that ensures the institution maintains a program that is characterized by sporting behavior and ethical conduct. Student-athletes are expected to treat all athletics groups, officials and opponents with the utmost respect. Athletics administrators will not tolerate aggressive behavior and such acts of aggression could result in the student-athlete being removed from the team and the potential for his or her scholarship to be withdrawn.
- Conducting exit interviews of all student-athletes leaving a team either to graduation or for other reasons. The summaries of these surveys will be provided to the Athletic Director and to the appropriate Head Coach.

### **1.2.3 Fully comply with the principles of both gender and diversity equity by:**

- Conducting regular surveys of students and/or incoming students to ensure that ULM is meeting the needs and interests of its student body and conducting reviews of potential sports with adequate opportunity for regional competition to see if expansion of sports is reasonable. There are three methods that can be used to demonstrate that an institution is complying with Title IX regulations.

The first is the proportionality test and simply means that the number of student athletes by gender should be in proportion to the number of students by gender. The second method is for the institution to demonstrate continued expansion and improvement. The third method is to fully meet the interest and opportunity for competing by females. At this time, ULM has shown continued improvement in the numbers and also feels it is substantially meeting the interests of its student body for opportunities to participate.

- Ensuring that teams are treated equitably concerning scheduling, travel, scholarships, supplies and other benefits.
- Updating the gender equity plan reflecting that it has made substantial improvements in its operations and that it now feels it meets the third prong of the Title IX test.
- Ensuring that ULM's student-athletes display diversity of the region. ULM remains committed to treating all student-athletes equitably.

### **1.3 Increase student participation in the athletic contests of the university**

ULM Athletics is committed to serving the needs of the greater student body and improving their overall experience. One of the main ways to do that is to ensure their involvement with the athletics program through attendance at games. An NCAA survey indicated that 73% of students around the country have a high interest in attending football games and 54% have a high interest in attending men's basketball. The top three reasons for attending were "like sporting events, fan of the sport and to support school." The top three reasons for not attending were "needing to study, work and better things to do." The interest of the student body towards athletic events has been impacted by inconsistent efforts to engage the students and offer exciting events. Efforts to communicate with students are hampered as there is not a single vehicle to make announcements to them or through which to contact them. The last few years has seen an increase in the number of students attending football games in particular. The following actions will help to continue to improve that situation.

#### **1.3.1 Conduct research of students to gather information about opinions by:**

- Performing a survey of students concerning attendance to see what they want.
- Conducting focus groups of various groups/classes of students to get their input.

#### **1.3.2 Develop a department wide schedule of contests and events that also reflects other university activities including intramural sports to avoid conflicts to the greatest degree possible and cross market when possible such as recognizing intramural champions and/or letting them compete at half time.**

#### **1.3.3 Notify the student body of athletic events through various and creative means.**

#### **1.3.4 Provide preferential student pricing including:**

- Providing free admission for ULM students for all contests.
- Providing discounted pricing to ULM student guests for all contests.
- Promoting sporting events to ULM non-traditional students who have families and work and developing special activities for this subset of the student body.

### **1.3.5 Market to students by:**

- Developing a comprehensive campus program that incorporates all campus groups including outreach meetings with organizations in the campus community and involvement in all phases of registration and orientation.
- Getting them involved during PREP and first few weeks of school by having coaches and student-athletes talk to them at orientation about coming to events and traditions of school.
- Asking the students to come – have coaches go across bayou to encourage attendance.
- Making a big deal out of attending.
- Meeting with school newspaper staff regularly to ensure publicity of events.
- Continuing the Maroon Platoon activities.

### **1.3.6 Produce student friendly and inviting contests/events by:**

- Involving student groups in planning.
- Recognizing students and student groups at the contest.
- Having give-a-ways, activities and contests at the games for students.
- Continuing and/or expanding special seating for students at games.
- Involving the students in the contest such as cheer coordination on microphone.
- Improving the music at contests to appeal to students.

## **2. Cultivating Climate and Culture**

This University planning theme includes a commitment to excellence within all elements of the university, recognition that the University is the mutual responsibility of the students, faculty, alumni and community, and that fulfilling the mission of the university requires an effective and efficient organization. For Athletics, this theme translates into the following goals:

### **2.1 Win games**

Winning teams playing contests against traditional opponents attract fans, ignite spirit, stimulate gifts, and bring people to the campus. As an alumnus put it “winning athletic programs are a significant part of the Louisiana culture, and universities down here are judged by their winning percentages in athletic competition.” There is no better measure of excellence on the field than winning.

The move to the Sun Belt Conference will be a step up in competitive level for many of the ULM athletic teams. It is recognized that there may be a transitional time as some of the teams adjust to the new level of competition. Ultimately though, ULM expects its teams to be competitive in the Sun Belt Conference in every sport. An expectation will exist for each of the teams to finish in the top half in the conference year end and year out, to achieve RPI indices in the top half of the conference and to periodically win conference championships. To do this ULM will take the following actions.

- #### **2.1.1 Create an atmosphere in which all student athletes, coaches, and staff genuinely expect to win and demand nothing less than the maximum effort from themselves, teammates, and fellow workers.**

**2.1.2 Allow each coach to utilize the full number of scholarships allowed by the NCAA.**

**2.1.3 Hire outstanding coaches and work hard to keep strong coaches.**

**2.1.4 Establish and implement performance expectations for each sport.**

**2.1.5 Identify annually the financial, facility and program support needs for each team to meet the performance expectations through meetings of the head coaches and their sports supervisor.**

**2.1.6 Develop solid recruiting activities to bring in the best student-athletes possible by:**

- Involving administration including President and Athletic Director.
- Holding an annual recruiting workshop for coaches that addresses best practices, strategies and ideas on how to recruit student-athletes who will succeed at ULM.
- Developing a recruiting documents file that maintains current information that can be sent to recruits including information on the university, admissions, academic majors, programs, athletic department, NCAA, news articles, etc.
- Involving academic personnel in the recruiting process.
- Following the Sun Belt recruiting Code of Conduct.
- Involving other sports to sell the entire program.
- Selling the institution and the positives identified in the student research including:
  - Institutional focus on students;
  - Friendly, caring, family atmosphere;
  - Value;
  - Faculty – small classes;
  - Size;
  - Look of campus – campus renaissance, library, activity center, bayou setting;
  - Safety of campus;
  - Availability of tutors;
  - Variety of student activities;
  - Compact layout of the campus– walking distance; and
  - Food services.

**2.1.7 Provide the student-athletes and teams the best possible support in such areas as:**

- Academic support;
- Strength and conditioning;
- Sports medicine;
- Equipment;
- Video services;
- Travel arrangements;
- Housing and food services; and
- Counseling.

**2.1.8 Create schedules that provide balance with opportunity for success – see separate discussion on scheduling in Theme 5.**

**2.2 Do everything with class – go the extra mile**

ULM will operate all areas of the athletic department at a top level. We will develop a commitment to excellence within all elements of the University. It will translate beyond the athletes themselves to include the professional presentation of contests, the fulfillment of sponsorships, presentation of broadcast games, game day operations, facilities maintenance, recruiting, selling of tickets, sports information activities, concessions, camps, branding, advertising and fundraising. This will be done in the following manner:

- 2.2.1 Elevate the level of expectation in performance. We will not accept the status quo or do things simply because they have always been done that way.**
- 2.2.2 Perform the NCAA Certification during 2009. Work should begin on the process in the 2006/07 school year.**
- 2.2.3 Conduct an annual retreat among staff to evaluate the past year and plan for the upcoming year identifying potential areas for improvement.**
- 2.2.4 Hire the best people available for the salary grade for open jobs.**
- 2.2.5 Empower employees to take appropriate action.**
- 2.2.6 Provide professional development for staff where needed including customer service training for all personnel that come in contact with external constituencies.**
- 2.2.7 Ensure that ULM athletics operates with outstanding sportsmanship by:**
  - Formally adopting a written plan that ensures the institution maintains a program that is characterized by sporting behavior and ethical conduct.
  - Educating all constituencies on a continual basis.
  - Having the President annually address the importance of sporting behavior with coaching staff and student athletes.
  - Having the President and Athletic Director annually conduct a meeting for the purpose of discussing sporting behavior, crowd control and ethical conduct with appropriate campus and support groups.
  - Requiring student-athletes to treat all athletics groups, officials and opponents with the utmost respect. Athletics administrators will not tolerate aggressive behavior and such acts of aggression could result in the student-athlete being removed from the team and the potential for his or her scholarship to be withdrawn.
  - Reading the Sun Belt Conference Sporting Behavior Statement prior to the start of each home contest.
  - Printing the NCAA principle of Sporting Behavior and Ethical Conduct in media guides, student-athlete handbook and game programs.
- 2.2.8 Develop a comprehensive communications plan for all constituencies including:**
  - Students;
  - Faculty;
  - Staff;
  - Alumni including Letterman's Club;
  - Community;
  - Supporters including Foundation members and ticket holders; and,

- Media.
- 2.2.9 Ensure professional ticket office operations by:**
- Updating the ticket office manual including complimentary ticket policy to reflect the current NCAA rules and operations.
  - Evaluating the ticket software and determining need for change or modification.
  - Developing plan to audit actual attendance at football games.
  - Improving fulfillment processes.
- 2.2.10 Upgrade the External Relations Activities of the Athletics Department. (See Strategic Theme 3 for details)**
- 2.2.11 Develop a facilities maintenance plan and institute a “wow” factor in each of the athletic facilities. (See Strategic Theme 4 for additional discussion on “Building the Campus Environment”)**
- 2.2.12 Foster, celebrate and expand the ULM athletics’ tradition by:**
- Telling the story of the past successes of ULM student-athletes, coaches, and teams and developing a method to display them effectively on campus.
  - Developing criteria for jersey retirements.
  - Continuing the Hall of Fame Banquet.
  - Increasing L-Club participation.
  - Creating a data base of former student-athletes
  - Holding reunions of former teams.
  - Communicating with former student-athletes as a whole and individually.
  - Holding functions on campus to encourage former student-athletes to participate.
- 2.2.13 Expect and require student-athletes to present themselves in a positive and appropriate manner.**
- 2.2.14 Raise promotions and event management to the next level and ensure that contests are presented professionally by:**
- Creating a complete annual event management plan.
  - Setting up a planning process for all events including game management policies and procedures for all games.
  - Making all contests into events (it’s about the experience) by:
    - a. Establishing new traditions and building on old ones that bring continuity and fun.
    - b. Creating a big time atmosphere at the games through spirit groups, souvenir stands, sideline mascot, kid areas, contests, music, celebrities, receptions, promotions, activities and “give-a-ways”
    - c. Improving the customer service provided to the fans at the contests.
    - d. Training the event workers to be focused on customer service versus a “policing” attitude.
    - e. Creating themes for contests.
    - f. Inviting and recognizing various groups at the contests.
    - g. Investigating game ops commander software or something similar for game management.
  - Evaluating the alcohol policy for all facilities including general stadium,

special seating, tailgating areas, and students.

### **2.3 Follow the rules**

The University of Louisiana at Monroe maintains a commitment to compliance through its systems and programs that service the athletics program. The role of Compliance Services is to ensure that the institution conforms to NCAA operating principles for rules compliance, academic integrity, fiscal integrity and equity. This is accomplished through rules education and testing, communication of interpretations, and certification and monitoring activities.

University staff members are expected to demonstrate a thorough understanding of NCAA legislation and a willingness to cooperate and assist with the compliance-related needs of the department. Coaches are to be concerned with the well being and academic success of their student-athletes. Overall, the compliance program will meet the needs of an NCAA Division I university and will ensure operation of the athletics program within the regulations of the NCAA and the Sunbelt conference. There will exist an expectation of no rule violations in regards to the NCAA, Sun Belt Conference or University. To ensure that ULM follows the rules, the following will be done:

**2.3.1 Maintain the direct reporting line from The Director of Compliance to the President of the University.**

**2.3.2 Hold an annual meeting with all athletic staff and student athletes where the President of the University addresses the group concerning the institution's commitment to rules compliance, sportsmanship and ethical conduct. Also provide information regarding academic and other student-athlete welfare issues.**

**2.3.3 Update the Compliance manual including:**

- A check list and to do list;
- Items that must be kept in Athletic Director's office;
- Role of FAR and FAC in compliance;
- Copies of forms to be used;
- Documentation of what is included in scholarships such as fees – why and why not;
- Documentation on the rule on out of state waiver – when academic and when athletic; (Document the impact of Louisiana out of state tuition waiver policy on athletic scholarships - qualified based on academics.)
- Documentation on the rule on awarding of out of state waivers when any athletic scholarship is given. (LSU handles out of state waiver differently, does not automatically give it.)

**2.3.4 Annually update the Student-Athlete Handbook and distribute to all student-athletes at the beginning of the year.** This handbook will address compliance with rules as well as a student-athlete code of conduct and sportsmanship statement.

**2.3.5 Annually update the Departmental Staff Handbook and distribute to all staff members at a full staff meeting at the start of each academic year.** This handbook will include information on NCAA, conference, and

institutional rules compliance and potential consequences. The Manual will contain detailed descriptions of compliance-related practices (e.g., the certification of student-athlete eligibility).

- 2.3.6 Include specific language in coaches' letters of appointment and/or contracts that exhibit the importance of compliance with NCAA, conference and institutional rules and regulations by stating that serious disciplinary action, including termination, could result form failure to adhere to such regulations.**
- 2.3.7 Continue to include compliance as a factor on which each coach is evaluated in annual performance appraisals.**
- 2.3.8 Educate coaches and staff on rules by:**
  - Conducting compliance or rules education at each of the athletic director's monthly head coaches' and staff meetings and an annual meeting at which all staff attend.
  - Providing all coaches access to NCAA manuals.
  - Distributing regular written correspondence containing timely reminders and interpretations of NCAA legislation. This is especially important in the restructured NCAA governance system, in which immediately effective legislation can be adopted two times a year.
  - Ensuring that newly hired coaches, especially those new to Division I, receive adequate compliance training and resources.
- 2.3.9 Have one person serve as a "clearinghouse" for compliance information to allow administrators and coaches to receive consistent information regarding NCAA legislation.**
- 2.3.10 Administer compliance forms to all student-athletes at the start of each academic year and have them complete the Student-Athlete Statement form.**
- 2.3.11 Maintain a formal plan that ensures the institution has a program that is characterized by sportsmanship and ethical conduct. (See 2.2.8)**
- 2.3.12 Document camps/clinics held and procedures used for each.**
- 2.3.13 Communicate with supporters concerning NCAA restrictions. Continue to include a section in the Staff Manual outlining NCAA restrictions on booster activity in the recruiting process and on the web site. Explore other ways to communicate rules to supporters such as direct mailing and/or including in membership forms.**
- 2.3.14 Maintain a recruiting system which ensures that all activities associated with visits by recruits are appropriate or reported.**
- 2.3.15 Comply with the NCAA rules for maintaining Division IA status.**

## **2.4 Develop the organization**

The Board of Regents expects an institution to maintain supervision of its intercollegiate athletic program and affirms the direction provided by the NCAA Constitution in that regard. "The Control and responsibility for the conduct of intercollegiate athletics shall be exercised by the institution itself and by the conference, if any, of which it is a

member. Administrative control or faculty control, or a combination of the two, shall constitute institutional control.”(Article 6.01.01)

Any organization is only as good as its people. Consequently, the athletic department will focus on hiring and retaining the best people possible. Given strong personnel, the organization will work to ensure that the organization operates as effectively as possible by the following actions:

**2.4.1 Update the athletic department organization chart including job descriptions reflecting any changes in responsibilities and share across the organization.**

- Include the following positions in 2006-07: Marketing Coordinator, an additional women’s basketball Assistant Coach, an additional baseball Assistant Coach, an additional Academic Counselor, 12 additional Graduate Assistants.

**2.4.2 Maintain the philosophy that the President of the institution has final authority and ultimate responsibility for the intercollegiate athletic programs of ULM. Accordingly, the Director of Athletics will be a member of the President’s Cabinet and the Athletic Compliance Officer will have a direct reporting relationship to the President. In addition, the Athletic Director will meet regularly with the President to keep him well informed concerning departmental issues. The Athletic Director will also regularly update the Faculty Athletics Council on the athletics program and he will address the Faculty Senate once a year concerning athletics.**

**2.4.3 Update and distribute annually, as mentioned above, the departmental staff handbook which will include a code of conduct.**

**2.4.4 Evaluate all potential areas of synergy from other operations on campus where athletics can integrate and utilize services provided including development, marketing, academic services, counseling, etc.**

**2.4.5 Build on the feeling of family and create the feeling of being one unified department by:**

- Developing an overall plan that all teams utilize with appropriate modifications.
- Supporting each other.
- Conducting regular departmental meetings to share information and activities across the organization.
- Communicating regularly as a group and individually.
- Creating opportunities for individuals get to know each other in various work settings and non-work functions.
- Encouraging the department to attend each others’ events and games to build on the feeling of support and “Team ULM.”

**2.4.6 Hold an annual retreat of the department to look for areas of improvement, review and update this strategic plan, and plan for the upcoming year.**

**2.4.7 In conjunction with the Faculty Athletic Representative and the Faculty Athletic Council, evaluate the charge of the Council and Representative to**

**see if there are ways to increase their role and to better define what their role is. Consider the following areas of expanded involvement:**

- Reviewing and recommending goals and policies for intercollegiate athletics at the University of Louisiana at Monroe;
- Increased advising to the president and athletics director and assistance in the maintenance of institutional control;
- Increased involvement as discussed above in academic matters;
- Planning efforts concerning gender equity initiatives, athletics facilities, marketing efforts, coaches' searches and budgeting issues; and,
- Compliance-related areas on a regular basis such as reviewing revisions to compliance-related policies and receiving updates on secondary violations.

**2.4.8 Update the operations and policy manual documentation for the ULM Athletic Foundation including:**

- Fund raising procedures,
- Expenditure procedures, and
- The need for Director Liability Insurance for Athletic Foundation – see if it can be added to ULM Foundation policy if needed and if they have.

**2.4.9 Continue to focus on strong diversity of employees in the same manner that led to the national diversity award that was received by the Athletic Department last year.**

**2.4.10 Work to move salaries closer to Sun Belt average.**

**2.4.11 Look for possible incentive compensation arrangements contingent on rules compliance and academic success.**

**2.4.12 Increase level of measurement with review and feedback (at least annually).**

**2.4.13 Evaluate utilization and expansion of various student groups and investigate whether we can give out of state tuition waivers including:**

- Undergraduate students for pay;
- Undergraduate students as volunteers;
- Undergraduate students as interns;
- Warhawk Scouts;
- ULM 31's;
- Student-athletes on scholarship but no longer playing; and,
- Graduate assistants.

**2.4.14 Document which positions get what added benefits and how they will be structured including:**

- Car;
- Cell phone service;
- Complimentary tickets;
- Spousal travel to games; and,
- Training table.

**2.5 Manage resources in the most efficient way**

- 2.5.1 Continue to operate with a balanced budget that is developed in accordance with University policies and procedures applicable to all departments as required by NCAA Constitution 6.2.2 and that receives the proper level of institutional review.**
- 2.5.2 Continue to have clean audits.**
- 2.5.3 Maximize university support of athletics program – including the E & G transfer, the student fee approved, the gender equity allocation of \$125,000 and the allowed gender equity scholarship supplement through a maximum of 50 tuition waivers.** As noted in the Carr Report, the basic margin of difference in revenues for ULM and its IA peers is in institutional and government support. The average Sun Belt school receives 65.6% of its funding from institutional support while ULM received only 47% of its support. In 2004-2005 for instance, Troy University, which also recently joined the Sun Belt for all sports received \$7,505,527 from its university allocation and \$475,000 from student fees for a total of \$7,980,527. This represented over 68% of its total revenues as compared to ULM's 2004-2005 amount of \$2,637,059 or 48%. The amount of institutional support received by Troy was 147% of ULM's entire athletic budget.
- 2.5.4 Maximize ticket sales for all sports including season, packages and game.**
- 2.5.5 Maximize corporate sponsorships.**
- 2.5.6 Maximize other revenue opportunities including concessions, logo licensing, facilities rental, and Foundation support.**
- 2.5.7 Evaluate other possible revenue sources taking into consideration the overall attendance impact such as:**
- Increasing ticket prices;
  - Selling tailgate area at baseball;
  - Increasing rate for grove parking;
  - Charging for parking in other areas; and,
  - Obtaining grants.
- 2.5.8 Prioritize needs for increased funding identified in this process and develop schedule for implementing including:**
- Salary increases;
  - Staffing levels;
  - Academic support;
  - Housing for students;
  - Facilities Upgrades;
  - Facilities Maintenance;
  - Equipment;
  - Grounds improvements;
  - Travel increases;
  - Recruiting budgets;
  - Website improvements;
  - Professional development; and,
  - Monitoring software for student attendance.

- 2.5.9 Develop method to include Foundation expenditures in total financial information/budget.**
- 2.5.10 Analyze medical expenses and evaluate alternatives to lower medical cost including insurance opportunities.**
- 2.5.11 Enter into contract with clothing and shoe vendor on department wide basis to maximize purchasing power, reduce cost and improve branding.**
- 2.5.12 Develop travel policies including rules on travel squads and transportation method.**

### **3. Extending External Relationships**

The University of Louisiana at Monroe is committed to the community and the entire region in which it is located. Its students, faculty, administration, and staff are active participants in the community through many avenues. ULM promotes its involvement in the community and encourages the community to become more involved with the University. The institution must maintain and expand relationships with all of its constituents, from the “Twin Cities,” throughout northeast Louisiana and beyond. ULM must integrate completely with the people of Monroe, West Monroe, and northeast Louisiana so that all people in proximity to ULM take ownership of the University with the attendant loyalty, pride, and commitment of resources.

External Revenue Operations for Athletics commonly include Development (fundraising), Marketing and Promotions, Ticket Operations and Sports Information. No area is any more critical to the advancement of the overall goals of the athletic department at ULM than the increasing of funding through external relationships. To meet the needs of the department, there simply must be increases in the revenue generated from the outside sources including ticket sales, sponsorship revenue and contributions.

This theme translates into the following goals for the athletic department:

#### **3.1 Increase the development activities of the Athletic Department**

The Department of Athletics recognizes the importance of fundraising and development. Thus, the Department maintains an overall goal to increase individual and corporate gift and fundraising to levels that will sufficiently fund primary operational needs and objectives as well as satisfy future capital requirements. Volunteer efforts for fundraising through the Athletic Scholarship Foundation have continued to be strong. The ULM Athletic Foundation has many active members, more than many booster organizations affiliated with larger universities. However, a taskforce from the planning process for the University’s overall plan noted the need to expand and formalize the fundraising efforts of the Athletic Department. Community representatives indicated there are dollars available that are not being effectively sought. More effective fundraising would entail understanding what private and corporate donors value and adequately recognizing private and corporate donors in a manner they value. The following should positively impact the development activities of the ULM Athletic Department.

- 3.1.1 Establish specific fundraising targets for each of the develop areas.**

**3.1.2 Continue and grow the annual membership campaign of the Athletic Foundation by:**

- Rebranding Foundation and evaluate benefits of membership levels.
- Improving database management and maintenance.
- Contacting all previous members to ask them to rejoin and document their responses.
- Creating methods and procedures to contact potential new members who have never been a member about joining.
- Expanding website/internet fund raising by putting membership form/ordering on line.
- Establishing reduced membership fee for recent graduates.
- Emphasizing unrestricted giving.
- Reviewing priority seating system.

**3.1.3 Conduct a major gifts/capital gifts campaign including naming opportunities.**

**3.1.4 Manage and expand the endowed scholarships at ULM Foundation and Athletic Foundation.**

**3.1.5 Institute a planned giving program and incorporate the current life insurance program.**

**3.1.6 Expand corporate sponsorships by:**

- Developing professional sales materials including rate cards that list all opportunities for participation with ULM Athletics.
- Evaluating current rate schedule and modify as necessary.
- Establishing a calling plan to make a sales call to all Chamber members in Ouachita Parish each year.
- Establishing levels of corporate sponsorships that provide special recognition.
- Obtaining University vendor list of companies selling more than \$10,000 to the school and contact each annually to sell sponsorships.
- Making a sales call on all Incumbent Worker Training Program companies on an annual basis.
- Contacting all conference sponsors and equipment vendors for possible sponsorships with ULM.
- Negotiating expanded relationship with Coke, hopefully improving various scoreboards, and investigating possibility of getting added vending machine revenue.
- Determining if casino sponsorship is allowed and contact as appropriate.
- Investigating the possibility of utilizing additional sales people on a commission basis to make calls for sponsorships.
- Expanding the list of items available for sale such as:
  - a. Daily radio updates;
  - b. Tag lines over PA such as XXX first down;
  - c. "In game" radio and PA awards;
  - d. Corporate outings;
  - e. Sponsorship of game day promotions;
  - f. Student activities;

- g. “Give-a-ways” with corporate name;
  - h. Internet advertising; and,
  - i. Events such as post game activities.
- Expanding signage to additional athletic venues.
  - Finding ways to help sponsors drive their sales through participation with ULM athletics in ways other than just advertising such as affinity programs, information booths, at event sales, etc.
  - Investigating the possibility of new video boards and scorers’ table for additional advertising sales.
  - Investigating a corporate village program for football and investigate similar opportunity for basketball and other sports.
  - Evaluating the benefit of establishing a corporate hospitality area within the confines of the stadium separate from the Skybox area.

**3.1.7 Negotiate, document and expand the following trade or gift in kind arrangements:**

- Hotels;
- Restaurants;
- Beverages;
- Courtesy Cars;
- Newspapers;
- Billboards;
- Gasoline;
- Radio stations;
- Television Stations; and,
- Workers.

**3.1.8 Grow the individual sports fund raising by getting supporters with a special affinity for the specific sport or coach involved and establish rules and procedures for the coaches’ efforts to ensure coordination and most effective efforts.**

**3.1.9 Effectively utilize the corporate suites including:**

- Leasing all suites and getting signed contracts.
- Working on renewing leases that are set to expire.
- Holding annual meeting with suite holders to discuss operations and needs.
- Developing plan for food as leases renew.
- Analyzing ticket allotment for lease renewals.

**3.1.10 Take all developmental activities to the next level by:**

- Developing professional sales pieces for fund raising.
- Involving coaches and student-athletes in all development activities to more intensely personalize solicitation of donors.
- Extending efforts of all development activities beyond Ouachita Parish.
- Establishing department wide annual schedule of all events, activities and meetings including:
  - a. Kick off Dinner;
  - b. Annual meeting;
  - c. Executive Committee and Board Meetings;
  - d. Satellite and alumni meetings; and,
  - e. Other fundraising activities.

- Establishing certain annual fund raising events for the athletic department and coordinate the scheduling of these with other activities of University and community. Consider the following:
  - a. A spring all sports fund raiser with athletes and community involved;
  - b. Outback Golf Classic for golf teams;
  - c. Lenny Fant Dinner and Award;
  - d. Hall of Fame Banquet;
  - e. Baseball Hackers Golf Tournament with auction;
  - f. Potential offsite function for ex Student-athletes;
  - g. Renowned speaker or past coach or player;
  - h. Concert; and,
  - i. Partnership with charity.
- Assigning specific responsibility to an employee to improve and ensure that fulfillment occurs in sponsorship purchases. (Ensure companies and individuals get what they buy.)

### **3.2 Increase the visibility of ULM and generate positive publicity for the University**

Athletics provides a unique opportunity for the University to get its name out to the public through regular media coverage and scheduled events. It is truly the front porch of the university. No other area of the institution has a section of the newspapers devoted to its activities. ULM will look to take advantage of these opportunities in the following ways.

#### **3.2.1 Make effective use of broadcasting media by:**

- Continuing to broadcast contests on radio and expand number of contests broadcast where feasible.
- Broadcasting games on television where feasible.
- Expanding geographical coverage of broadcasts where feasible.
- Exploring the use of KXUL, ULM's station, for broadcasts.
- Exploring the use of the school's recording equipment for broadcasting.
- Exploring all possible synergies to be gained from the university's program of mass communications including journalism, media production and public relations.
- Investigating the expansion of the sports broadcast and number of games broadcast.
- Determining the best mix of what to broadcast – games, coaches' show, internet, television, radio.
- Developing an annual plan for talent of the broadcasts.

#### **3.2.2 Continue to develop the website by:**

- Exploring if any upgrade is needed in system.
- Keeping the information up to date.
- Posting current upcoming events.
- Adding newsletters from department and coaches to the website.
- Investigating internet video broadcasting.
- Selling advertising on the website.
- Selling ULM merchandise on the website.

- Improving the ticket information/ordering/purchasing on the website.
- Improving Foundation information/membership/contributions on the website including investigating posting membership letters on site.
- Putting new fight song with Warhawks on the site.
- Putting Alma Mater on the site.

**3.2.3 Effectively utilize all available advertising gained through trade agreements and look to expand the trade agreements with various media outlets including:**

- Developing a comprehensive schedule for all advertising to ensure best reach of advertising.
- Utilizing someone with experience to put together advertising to be used in trade outs.
- Reinstating the use of billboards for increasing awareness and branding – preferably through a trade agreement.

**3.2.4 Increase the signage on campus and around town using the new logo including distributing information and materials around town for businesses to display.**

**3.2.5 Hold various fan/media days with autographs, youth groups, and clinics.**

**3.2.6 Improve media coverage by:**

- Developing a schedule and budget for media guides and producing them on schedule before the season begins.
- Holding an annual media dinner to cultivate relationships.
- Issuing news releases on a regular basis telling the media what is going on with ULM Athletics and getting the good news out.
- Strengthening relationship and communication with various media personnel.

**3.2.7 Establish an overall communication plan for the department and communicate with various constituencies utilizing email where possible including:**

- Publicizing the strengths of the ULM athletics program to all groups including the benefits of athletics to the various constituencies.
- Coordinating between groups such as alumni, boosters, and Letterman’s Club to create a constant flow of communication.
- Evaluating the addition of all boosters to the Alumni “Good News” Report and working with them to serve purpose.
- Developing a comprehensive email list to use in communications.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of sending all news releases to booster list by email.
- Establishing a coaches’ speakers bureau and have them speak on a regular basis throughout north Louisiana.

**3.2.8 Hold various events that will generate publicity such as:**

- Clinics for fans such as a football primer for female fans.
- Coaching clinics for volunteer coaches.
- Charity events separate from games such as a shoot-a-thon, hit-a-thon, 100 mile run, etc.

**3.2.9 Actively market the rental of our facilities to increase revenue and exposure. Work with Convention and Visitors Bureau to look at possibility of hosting more tournaments.**

**3.3 Assert a clear and consistent identity for the University**

A taskforce from the University's planning process emphasized the need for effective brand marketing. The lack of a solid marketing plan for athletics at ULM has resulted in a hodge-podge of efforts to increase name recognition. There has been inconsistency in the marketing effort of athletics at ULM hampered by the lack of positive media coverage for both athletics and the university as a whole until recently; insufficient variety and availability of ULM merchandise in the ULM bookstore, in local stores, and at games; and lack of funding.

There is a need for a consistent logo and image portrayed for ULM. Students, faculty, alumni and donors are influenced by collegiate sports programs, which, with effective branding, can burnish a school's image, extend its reach, and expand opportunities for capitalization. We need to accurately communicate the school's personality through a visual and verbal identity. Effective branding forms and reinforces the positive, memorable associations that bind people to the University and its sports teams. It should energize the community and express the promise the program can fulfill.

There is a need to "sell" the Athletic Program to the community. An overall marketing plan is required. All aspects of marketing need to be considered to more effectively tap internal and external supporters. With the recent introduction of the new logo and mascot, the University has a unique opportunity to move this area forward in a hurry. To do so, the Athletic Department will:

**3.3.1 Develop and implement a marketing plan for Athletics that encompasses all aspects of promotion and delivery of product to internal and external potential supporters by:**

- Developing an annual marketing plan for the athletics program.
- Hiring a marketing person who will work with university marketing personnel to coordinate the effort.
- Utilizing graduate assistants working with the head coaches to develop marketing plans and activities for Olympic sports programs.
- Ensuring that the "product" encompasses all items available with consistent university athletic logos.
- Developing an overall media marketing plan.
- Developing a media marketing plan for each game.
- Increasing advertising and giveaways to fully utilizing the media trade agreements.
- Supporting all sports with advertising.
- Marketing student-athletes.
- Developing ways for coaches and student-athletes to be more visible on campus and in the community.
- Having celebrities at games.
- Increasing efforts to sell advertising in and sale of game programs.

- Exploring the possibility of using students for commission to their organization or as their scholarship work for certain aspects of the marketing plan.
- Promoting past heroes.

**3.3.2 Develop a branding and image plan to build on the momentum generated by the selection of the new Warhawk mascot and logo including:**

- Incorporating suggestions concerning media exposure, publications, website management and speaking engagements found elsewhere in this plan to broaden the brand exposure.
- Establishing guidelines for the use of the new athletic logo and mascot.
- Standardizing the new logo and utilizing it on all written material, signage, merchandise, clothing, uniforms, advertising, internet, emails, etc.
- Putting the new logo on everything possible.
- Using the logo on campus and at events.
- Working with Collegiate Licensing to garner broad distribution and drive licensing revenue.
- Finding ways to get merchandise available in stores and on web.
- Entering a cup deal with new logo on it to use in the concession stand.
- Developing a new “sideline” mascot to perform at games and have it perform as often as possible.
- Publicizing the new logo and mascot.
- Utilizing contests for renaming various old Indian references.
- Identifying and building on traditions.
- Starting new traditions that take advantage of the new logo and mascot.
- Sending merchandise with new logo to Mayors, Legislators and other elected officials.
- Sending merchandise with new logo to media personnel.
- Creating a plan to sell merchandise with logo at games.

**3.4 Increase the attendance at athletic contests by the community**

An NCAA survey indicated that over 40% of the general public have “high interest in attending college football games.” The survey also indicated that athletic events need to differentiate themselves from other activities. Fans want access to individual and team statistics, scores from other games, updated biographical information on participants, historical information and other facts accessible through technology. Athletic contests provide an opportunity to bring people to the campus and to further develop their ties to the University. To do this the Athletic Department will:

**3.4.1 Conduct a survey of north Louisiana residents to gather information about their potential to attend various athletic contests and what they are looking for.**

**3.4.2 Conduct surveys at games to get feedback from attendees.**

**3.4.3 Conduct a survey of faculty/staff to gather information about their potential to attend various athletic contests and what they are looking for.**

**3.4.4 Conduct season ticket campaigns for football, basketball and baseball including:**

- Developing a media plan utilizing print, television, radio, billboards,

internet/email and speakers.

- Developing advertising for all media available.
- Contacting university employees with offer of discount on prices.
- Selling beyond Ouachita Parish.
- Getting media to run stories as possible.
- Selling on web site.
- Contacting businesses about payroll inserts.
- Mailing to prior season ticket holders and booster membership.
- Starting the campaigns earlier.
- Supplementing sales effort with calls by phone.
- Coordinating with sponsorship activity so tickets can be included in agreement and only one call made.
- Requesting corporate sponsors to only take best seats for ones that will be used regularly.
- Selling both reserved seats and general admission.
- Having “Blitz” day or week with coaches, players, and boosters selling tickets and handing out schedules and posters.
- Having a slogan or tag line for each campaign or all campaigns for the year.
- Evaluating offering a Warhawk pass that allows attendance at all sports including a discount for Faculty/Staff.
- Including a group sales offering.
- Creating excitement about the upcoming season.
- Having the coaches and players involved in the promotion phase of the campaign.

**3.4.5 Develop regular method to sell individual game tickets versus just taking orders including:**

- Creating special events and having game day activities whenever possible.
- Increasing game day awareness in community by displaying flags, colors, signs, etc. around town.
- Having a marketing and advertising plan for games in addition to the season campaign.
- Utilizing all advertising gained in trade agreements.
- Selling and promoting game on website.
- Sending emails to as broad of a distribution as possible.
- Having sales people working on commission only sell to the public.
- Utilizing student workers to make calls.
- Evaluating possibility of allowing student-athletes from teams to sell for funds for their sport.

**3.4.6 Encourage faculty/staff of the university to attend by:**

- Sending emails inviting them.
- Adding activities for them.
- Making a big deal of faculty/staff that attend.
- Informing new faculty at orientation by having athletic personnel attend.
- Holding a reception for new and old faculty/staff that support or all

faculty/staff.

- Holding a faculty/staff social with coaches.
- Recognizing them at contests and events.
- Evaluating the possibility of providing them special parking at games.
- Having coaches go across bayou and ask faculty/staff to attend contests.
- Having student-athletes invite them to attend.
- Doing special things for faculty/staff that attend.

**3.4.7 Increase marketing efforts including:**

- Grassroots and non-traditional marketing such as emails to people, signs around town, and fliers to maintain and build interest.
- Beyond Ouachita Parish through media trade agreements and mailings including email.
- To the kindergarten through high school ages by such methods as a kids' club.

**3.4.8 Raise event management to the next level and create exciting and first class promotions.**

- See discussion in section on "Doing everything with class."

**3.4.9 Improve scoreboards and public address announcing to provide fans with the information they want.**

**3.4.10 Develop the Grove area and maximize its potential for enhancing the experience of the attendees.**

**3.4.11 Create a family atmosphere.**

**3.4.12 Find ways to reward attendance.**

**3.5 Cultivate opportunities for the University's alumni and friends to further ULM's mission by giving of their time, talents, and treasure**

For the University and the Athletics Program to reach its full potential, the University's alumni and friends must become fully engaged with its activities. They must continue to give of their time, talents and treasures and even reach new levels of involvement. To facilitate this increased involvement, the Athletic Department will take the following steps.

- 3.5.1 Market to alumni through alumni mailings or direct communication such as email.**
- 3.5.2 Participate in the various alumni meetings.**
- 3.5.3 Schedule social activities that involve current and prospective donors with the staff of the Department of Athletics.**
- 3.5.4 Continue to work with the alumni department to include athletic information in their communications.**
- 3.5.5 Establish plan for fan travel opportunities including policy for guest invitees.**
- 3.5.6 Expand the operations and activities of the Letterman's Club – utilize part time individuals to contact potential members.**
- 3.5.7 Develop method for past Presidents of Athletic Foundation to have input and stay involved.**

### **3.5.8 Recognize groups at games, on buildings, on website, and in newsletters including:**

- Support groups
- Sponsors
- Faculty/staff
- Faculty Senate
- Faculty Athletic Council
- Students and student organizations
- Youth teams
- Elected Officials
- Community Organizations

## **4. Building the Campus Environment**

As the primary venue for learning, discovery, and living, the campus physical environment significantly affects the University's academic, cultural, and social life. These facilities, furthermore, contribute greatly to the institution's external and internal image, as well as the *esprit* that unites the members of the immediate University family. Attractive, well-equipped, and well-maintained buildings and recreational spaces that are sufficient in size and number are prerequisite to the success of ULM's recruitment and retention efforts.

The quality of facilities is critical to the success of any athletics program. Tremendous advancement has been made in the physical plant of the University and it is located on a beautiful bayou. There are some excellent sports facilities on the ULM Campus that are as fine or finer than the facilities of other universities of similar size and all of them are solid athletic facilities. See Appendix C for a list of the University of Louisiana at Monroe's Athletic Facilities and Appendix D for a list of recent improvements in these facilities.

The basic infrastructure is there for the facilities; however, as with any Division 1A program, a substantial amount of money is required for continual maintenance, repair, renovation and advancement. Some facilities need to be refurbished and/or better maintained. To provide a superior quality environment, the Athletic Department will:

### **4.1 Develop, implement and maintain a master facilities plan**

- 4.1.1 Perform a comprehensive review of needed additional facilities; needed maintenance; and, office design, space allocation options and alternative arrangements for efficiency.** (See Appendix E for possibilities identified in various surveys and interviews.)
- 4.1.2 Develop cost projections, funding plans, ADA requirements and customer service requirements.**
- 4.1.3 Investigate any possibilities for additional shared use facilities with other campus operations.**
- 4.1.4 Work within the University structure to prioritize and present capital needs to state bodies.**
- 4.1.5 Make a substantial improvement every year for each facility.**

- 4.2 Update the Facilities Usage Policy and Rental Rate Schedule including Insurance requirements**
- 4.3 Improve the on-going look and operations of athletic facilities**
- 4.3.1 Develop and improve the system of maintenance of athletic facilities including schedule for painting, cleaning and janitorial schedule with list of things to be done.**
- 4.3.2 Set up a facilities use schedule for all facilities that is posted for all to see.**
- 4.3.3 Improve the look of the facilities to be more inviting to the constituencies of the University.**
- 4.3.4 Improve the look of the grounds around athletic facilities.**
- 4.3.5 Develop well maintained areas and displays throughout the athletic facilities which showcase and tell the history of the athletic program including the success of student-athletes, coaches and teams including:**
- Trophies
  - Pictures
  - Halls of Fame – ULM and Louisiana
  - Support Groups
  - Electronic Signs
- 4.3.6 Institute a bit of “wow” in each of the facilities – “Disney” approach, 10 - 15 feet of garden or something similar which grabs the attention of attendees.**
- 4.3.7 Develop a mindset to make something better every day – fix it, clean it, paint it, straighten it.**
- 4.3.8 Evaluate the possibility of an “athletics work day.”**
- 4.3.9 Service and/or upgrade all scoreboards and signage.**
- 4.3.10 Assign a coach from each team to work with Grounds and Facilities to determine needs and use schedule of each facility.**
- 4.3.11 Improve the working relationship with ULM Facilities and Maintenance and identify a point of interface in the Department of Athletics.**
- 4.4 Develop a list of all working equipment and an equipment needs priority list and develop a plan for obtaining** (See appendix F for list of items identified as possibilities during surveys and interviews during this process)

## **5. Scheduling**

Scheduling overlaps the various strategic themes to such a degree that it will be discussed separately. Scheduling for the various sports impacts all of the themes in some fashion. Moving all sports into the Sun Belt will have a positive impact on scheduling in that all teams will play the same conference teams which will help to build rivalries. In addition, teams will be able to schedule old Southland opponents which have rivalries and are geographically close. To move this strategic theme forward, the athletic department will be guided by the following goals.

- 5.1 Coordinate with other school activities and cross market when possible**

- 5.2 Develop and maintain a composite schedule of all sports in order to minimize the number of conflicts at home**
  - 5.2.1 Have the Athletic Director become more involved in scheduling and concentrate on the three sports that report directly to him.**
  - 5.2.2 Have all contracts and schedules go through the Associate Athletic Director who will maintain the master schedule.**
- 5.3 Create individual team schedules that balance fan interest, opportunity for success and financial considerations**
  - 5.3.1 Create a balance between home and away games (the more home games the better).**
  - 5.3.2 Schedule schools that are in state or close to ULM and with which fans are familiar and interested – including guarantee games.**
  - 5.3.3 Schedule teams with strong fan interest early in schedule if possible.**
  - 5.3.4 Take into account recruiting areas when scheduling away games.**
  - 5.3.5 Minimize the cost of travel by scheduling away games with schools that are geographically close to ULM.**
  - 5.3.6 Continue to schedule old Southland opponents to extent possible due to fan familiarity and geographic proximity.**
  - 5.3.7 Consider having some basketball doubleheaders to allow fans to support both teams.**
  - 5.3.8 Develop consistent times for competition for the various sports to allow fans to become familiar with nights for games.**
  - 5.3.9 Establish on-going home tournaments where possible including:**
    - Mardi-Gras Softball;
    - Women’s Basketball; and,
    - Baseball.
- 5.4 Balance guarantee games and non-guarantee games**
  - 5.4.1 Seek guarantee games where ULM can be competitive.**
  - 5.4.2 Spread guarantee games out and don’t play them all in a row.**
  - 5.4.3 Have all sports challenge its teams with guarantee games but not overload any one team.**
  - 5.4.4 Move to have less budget reliance on guarantee games.**

## **Appendix A – Sources of Information**

- ULM Strategic Plan Level 1 dated 4/21/04
- Athletics Strategic Planning Taskforce Report from the 2004 ULM Planning Process
- Report on ULM Athletics issued by Carr Sports Associates, Inc. dated July, 2004
- Previous University of Louisiana at Monroe Athletic Department Planning Document
- Surveys and Interviews with Cabinet Members and Other Selected University Leadership
- Surveys and Interviews with Athletic Department Employees
- Various ULM Student Research Documents
- ULM Athletic Budgets
- ULM Athletic Foundation Financials
- ULM EADA Reports 1996-2005
- ULM Documents on Compliance History
- ULM Student Athlete Handbook
- ULM Department/Staff Handbook
- ULM Compliance Manual and Procedures
- ULM Ticket Department Manual
- ULM's NCAA 5 Year Look Behind Study prepared by the ULM Faculty Athletic Council dated March 2005
- Various Job Descriptions of the Athletic Department
- Various Internal ULM Correspondence Concerning Planning and Operations
- Notes from Noel-Levitz Leadership Development Workshop on March 11-12, 2003
- James L. Fisher, Ltd Report on ULM in 2002
- Various Presentations to the Louisiana Board of Supervisors Concerning ULM Athletics
- State Colleges and Universities of Louisiana System Institution Presidents Evaluation Performance Planning Document
- Southland Conference Planning Documents
- 2002 Southland Conference Compliance Review Report of ULM
- Sun Belt Conference Planning Documents
- Sun Belt Conference Schools Athletic Financial Data
- Louisiana Board of Regents Policies for State Fund Usage in Athletic Programs
- Various Other University Athletics Strategic Plans
- 2003 NCAA Football Division IA Student Attendance Study Summary
- 2003 NCAA Football Division IA Media research Study
- The State of NCAA Division I Football: A Survey of Division IA & IAA Presidents & Chancellors prepared by The Taylor Research & Consulting Group, Inc. for the NCAA dated January 2002
- Nielsen Media Research Concerning Football and Basketball prepared for the NCAA in 2002
- Nielsen Media Research Concerning Student Attendance prepared for the NCAA in 2003
- A Look at Division I Football Finances prepared by NCAA Research Team in February 2003
- Various Other NCAA Survey Reports
- NCAA Division I Athletics Certification Instrument
- NCAA Division I Manual – Constitution, Operating Bylaws, Administrative Bylaws
- NCAA Graduation Reports
- Other NCAA Documents
- 05/06 Athletic Budgets of various Louisiana Universities

## Appendix B – Sports Sponsored

The University of Louisiana at Monroe Athletic Department sponsors 16 men’s and women’s sports – all competing in the Sun Belt Conference. The Sun Belt Conference holds championships in 19 sports as one of only 11 NCAA Division IA conferences.

<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>
Soccer	Football
Basketball	Basketball
Softball	Baseball
Cross Country	Cross Country
Indoor Track and Field	Indoor Track and Field
Outdoor Track and Field	Outdoor Track and Field
Golf	Golf
Volleyball	
Tennis	

## **Appendix C – University of Louisiana at Monroe Athletic Facilities**

The athletic facilities at ULM include the following:

- Malone Football Stadium (includes corporate suites and club seating areas)
- Fant-Ewing Basketball Coliseum
- ULM Baseball Stadium
- ULM Softball Stadium
- Brown Track Stadium
- Heard Tennis Stadium
- ULM Soccer Field (under construction)
- Golf – Main course for team is Bayou DeSiard Country Club with access to several other private and public courses
- Volleyball – Were in Brown Gym, moving to Fant-Ewing
- Other important facilities are:
  - ULM Activity Center – many athletic facilities that can be used for overload, used by ULM students as a whole
  - Clarke M. Williams Student Success Center – under construction; will be utilized by all students with a specific area set aside for use by student-athletes
  - Strength and Conditioning Areas and Facilities - located in Malone Stadium and Fant-Ewing Coliseum
  - Training Rooms - located in Malone Stadium and Fant-Ewing Coliseum
  - Athletic Staff offices - located in Malone Stadium, Fant-Ewing Coliseum, Development Office, Baseball Stadium, Softball Stadium, Brown Stadium, Heard Stadium, Golf Building, and Academic Area
  - Video Equipment and Production - located in Malone Stadium
  - Grove Tailgating Area - located adjacent to Malone Stadium
  - All teams sponsored by ULM have their own dressing rooms with the exception of golf which does not practice on campus

## **Appendix D – Recent Improvements in Athletic Facilities**

A number of improvements and/or upgrades have been made to the ULM athletic facilities over the last few years. These include:

### **Malone Stadium**

Recently painted  
New sod in 2001  
Entrance area redone in 2002  
Skybox redone in 2002  
Strength and Conditioning area redone in 03  
New elevator added in 03  
Home dressing room redone in 2001  
Leaking problems corrected in 2004

### **Fant-Ewing Coliseum**

Upgraded offices of men's coaches  
Upgraded men's locker room  
Upgraded women's locker room – will be volleyball locker room  
Floor currently being redone

### **Baseball Field**

Painted in 2006  
New walls along outfield foul lines installed in 2006  
Improvements to locker room in 2005  
Dugouts redone in 2006

### **Softball Field**

Major renovations and upgrades completed in 2005 including:  
Two dressing rooms  
Public restrooms  
Concession area  
Press box  
Umpire dressing room  
Offices  
New bleachers  
New sidewalks

### **Brown Stadium**

Track resurfaced in 2005  
Hammer cage added in 2005  
Drainage fixed in 2005

### **Heard Stadium**

Courts resurfaced in 2005  
Stadium painted in 2004

## Appendix E – List of Potential Facilities Improvements for Use in Master Facilities Plan

<b>Malone Stadium</b>	<b>Baseball Stadium</b>
Artificial turf	Get rid of chain link fence with wrought iron fence
Makeover for stadium	New fence in outfield
Touch up painting	Indoor pitching area
New electrical	Improved sound system with additional speakers
Scoggins Room update	New scoreboard
Upgrade stadium offices – carpet, paint, ceiling	Remodel coaches offices, players' lounge & storage area
Hallway upgrade	Press box renovation
Cover on the roof of press box for video	Consider moving Technical services from stadium
Towers in the football practice facility	Pave parking lot
Resurface east practice field	Improve restroom corridor
Overall upgrade	Develop and pave outfield fan areas
End zone facility – Field House	Move and expand kids' zone
New scoreboard and Jumbotron	Enclose the outdoor batting cages
Get rid of chain link fence	Add radio speakers to restrooms
Air conditioner and heating improvements	Move home bullpen to field
Seat repair	Add covered storage area outside right field gate
Redo or eliminate kitchen	Benches in front of stadium
Carpet in halls and locker room	Resurface dugouts
Indoor area to sprint	Add skybox areas on both sides of press box
Plans for football practice fields	Flag poles in various parts of stadium
Sprinkler system on practice fields	Address Pigeon problem
Address Pigeon problem	<b>Soccer Field</b>
<b>Softball Field</b>	Dugouts for field
New scoreboard	Stands
New dugouts	Restrooms
Enclose bullpens	Lights
Light for bullpens	Concession stand
Get rid of chain link fence with wrought iron fence	Locker rooms
Covered or enclosed batting cage with lighting	Press box
New field fence	Coaches office
New netting for cages	House located by field – any use?
New backstop net	<b>Fant-Ewing Coliseum</b>
Warning track	New scoreboard with jumbotron
Improve grounds appearance	Handicap seating
Improved sound system with additional speakers	Outside area spruced up
Batting practice cage for rolling on field	Front area spruced up
<b>Brown Stadium</b>	Redo Lenny Fant room
Renovation of offices, increased space	Student section on floor of coliseum
Storage	Larger coaches offices with meeting room
Meeting room	Updated furniture in offices
Renovation of dressing rooms	New women's locker room including TV and computers
Renovation of press box	Improvements in men's locker room
Look of parking lot	Coaches locker rooms
Awning over men's locker room to stop rain from coming in	Video room
Upgrade PA with wireless microphone system	Backlit advertising table on floor
New track	Clean and improve look of trophy cases in coliseum
Signage that says Groseclose Track and rules for usage	<b>Grove area</b>
Consider moving printing out of Brown to increase space	Restrooms
Building at finish line to serve as storage room, concession stand, video/timers stand, and meet officials computer room	Covered area with fireplace with permanent tables/heaters/fans
<b>Golf</b>	Corporate area
Expanded offices	Foundation area
Area for club repair	<b>Other</b>
Team room	Consider additional space in Fant/Ewing, Baseball Stadium, and Brown by moving non-athletic operations to other building
Security for offices	Heating/cooling/electrical of various facilities
Driving range on campus	All Scoreboards
Facility at one of the courses	Improve look both internally, externally and grounds
Video room	Video facilities including production
Consider giving golf the rest of the old Booster House	Arrangement of offices for efficiency
<b>Volleyball</b>	Need for office renovations - new office furniture
New locker room in Fant/Ewing	Training room arrangement – additional space and need for two or one
Set up on floor for matches	All Press boxes
Arrangements for practice	Additional office for Strength and Conditioning Personnel
	Storage
<b>Heard Stadium</b>	Meeting rooms
Renovation of offices and dressing rooms	Plan for use of Scoggins room and/or possible renovation
New wind screens	

## **Appendix F – List of Potential Equipment Needs for Use in Equipment Needs Priority List Development**

Color laser printer in Sports Information Department  
New laptop computers in Sports Information Department  
New printer and fax machine in Sports Information Department  
High speed copier in Sports Information Department  
Laptops and printers for road for Sports Information Department  
Facelift for weight equipment  
Additional bars and weights  
New treadmills, bikes, stair masters (cardio equipment)  
Redo and refurbish strength machines  
Additional rehab equipment in sports medicine  
More modalities in sports medicine  
More whirl pools in sports medicine  
Fix projectors in meeting rooms so don't fall  
Cameras for video services  
Tapeless system for video services  
Basketball video editing system  
Audio Equipment  
Deep tine aerator for grounds  
Paint machine for grounds  
Drag mats for grounds  
Hose for grounds  
Truck for grounds  
Game presentation equipment  
Promotional props like tee shirt throwers  
Matching chairs for Malone Stadium meeting rooms and offices  
Video equipment for golf  
Laptop printers for academic support  
Ticket counters  
Chairs for ticket booths and press boxes  
Portable PA system  
Cardjet printer for ticket office  
Pigeon problem  
Instant replay equipment – Football  
Video editing system - Football  
Computer for football ops - Football  
Larger TV screens - Football  
Portable screens – Softball  
11 inch dimple balls - Softball  
Light flight balls - Softball  
Video equipment - Golf  
Laptop connection - Golf  
Hurdles - Track  
Hurdle Cart - Track  
Field event implements - Track