California State University, Chico

Division of Student Affairs
Intercollegiate Athletics
Annual Report 2025-2026

Departmental Annual Report Outline (2-5 pages max)

I. Mission Statement *(If changed since last report)*

The mission of the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics at California State University, Chico is to provide a broad-based, competitive NCAA Division II intercollegiate athletics program.

II. Accomplishments - A highlight

- Leveraging Our Strengths in What We Do
  - **Athletic Success:**
    - Chico State placed second in the 2025-26 CCAA Robert J. Hiegert Cup Commissioner's Cup. The award is given to the CCAA institution with the highest aggregate ranking in eight of the conference-sponsored sports. Top-performing teams in the fall, winter, and spring along with two additional sports from any season earn point based on the conference standings. The Wildcats have finished in the top two 16 times since the award's inception in AY2005-06, including seven Cup wins. (GOOD TO GO – RH)
    - Chico State finished the season ranked among the top 100 NCAA Division II institutions again, placing 81st out of 251 in the Learfield Directors' Cup. Similar to the CCAA's Hiegert Commissioner's Cup, the Learfield Directors' Cup recognizes the top athletic department at the national level. Chico State's final placing in the national standings ranks third in the CCAA and seventh in the West Region. (GOOD TO GO – RH)
  - **Academic Success:**
    - During AY2025-26, Chico State student-athletes continued to improved their standard of academic achievement. The year culminated in 2 landmark "department bests", as the Wildcats earned the highest GPA and earned the most 3.0's in Chico State Athletics history.
      - The Athletics Department earned a 3.356 Cumulative GPA (Highest in Wildcat Athletics history)
      - 284 (76%) Wildcats earned a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher (Most in Wildcat Athletics history)
      - 7 Wildcats earned a perfect 4.0 cumulative GPA

- **Diversity Efforts:**
    - Chico State Athletics remains committed to fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment for all student-athletes, coaches, and staff. Our 2025-26 student-athlete population reflects the rich diversity of our campus and community, with representation as follows:
        - White (Non-Hispanic): 164 (44%)
        - Hispanic/Latino (Any Race): 111 (30%)
        - Two or More Races (Non-Hispanic): 42 (11%)
        - Black/African American (Non-Hispanic): 27 (7%)
        - Asian: 8 (2%)
        - American Indian: 1 (<1%)
        - Unknown: 15 (4%)
    - Among the 371 student-athletes that participated this year, 56% identify as underrepresented minorities, a 7% increase from the previous year.
    - We were proud to deepen our commitment to inclusion through significant support from the NCAA. In addition to receiving the NCAA Ethnic Minority and Women's Internship Grant, which provided $30,000 for one year to help build a more inclusive and representative leadership pipeline, we were awarded two additional NCAA grants, the Strategic Alliance Matching Salary Grant and the Coaching Enhancement Grant. The Strategic Alliance Matching Salary Grant will provide approximately $141,795 in salary and benefits support over three years, covering 75% in year one, 50% in year two, and 25% in year three. The impact of this investment is already evident, as our intern successfully secured full-time employment and has begun her career in collegiate athletics. Together, these investments expand opportunities for diverse professionals, strengthen our coaching and administrative pipelines, and further our commitment to developing the next generation of leaders in intercollegiate athletics.
- **Advancing Our Influence by How We Do Our Work**
    - Invested in critical facility improvements in Acker Gym and Shurmer Gym to enhance safety, functionality, and the overall student athlete and campus recreation experience.
    - Completed a deep sanding and resurfacing of the Shurmer Gym floor and will install new basketball rims, creating a safer, higher quality practice environment for Athletics and Recreational Sports.
    - Advanced electrical improvements in Acker Gym that will allow Athletics to fully utilize the digital scorer's table, expanding

advertising and sponsorship opportunities while enhancing the game day experience for fans and student athletes.
    - Hosted the second annual Night of Champions, building on the success of the inaugural event and creating an even stronger celebration of Chico State Athletics, student athlete achievement, and the supporters who make our success possible.
    - Introduced the Champions Circle, a new donor recognition and stewardship program for supporters who have established a named scholarship and/or contribute $1,500 or more annually to Chico State Athletics.
    - Expanded our approach to donor stewardship by transitioning the traditional Named Scholarship Luncheon into a Champions Circle reception, allowing us to recognize named scholarship donors while also intentionally engaging and stewarding our broader group of leadership annual donors.

III. Program Statistics and Assessment for Past Year

- Chico State Athletics continues to successfully sponsor thirteen NCAA Division II intercollegiate teams with full rosters despite the decline in campus enrollment. The 2025-26 student-athlete head count slightly increased with 371 unique student-athletes.
- **139** student-athletes (37%) achieved CCAA Academic Honor Roll Awards. Criteria: Awarded to varsity student-athlete, sophomore status or higher that competed this year and achieved a 3.3 GPA or higher.
- **72** student-athletes achieved a Division II Athletic Directors Association Academic Achievement Award. Criteria: student-athlete must have a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale; must have completed a minimum of two years (four semesters) of college level work at a two-year and/or four-year institution; must have been an active member of an intercollegiate team during his/her last academic year.
- Chico State Athletics continues to see growth on its Instagram account (@ChicoAthletics). Since August 2023, Athletics has seen a 200% follower increase from 2,000 to nearly 6,000, surpassing comparable general athletics accounts within the NCAA West Region. More than 53 collaborative videos generated over 9.3 million views (peak 101,000) and 163,000 interactions, and an organic reach to 433,100 accounts. (GOOD TO GO – RH)
- Chico State and the CCAA completed the second year in partnership with FloCollege, the conference's official streaming platform. Chico State continued to set the standard for the production of home athletic events. Successfully produced and delivered over 80 home athletic events to the network subscribers, resulting in net revenue of over $15,000 to offset personnel and production costs. (GOOD TO GO – RH)

California State University, Chico

- 148 student-athletes were supported by athletic grant-in-aid totaling $723,019. This includes $118,953 from Athletics Named Scholarships.
- Collaborated with University Advancement for two crowdfunding events, Back the Cats and Giving Day. Funds raised support operational expenses for sport teams and student-athlete support programs**. Totals for 2025-26 297,866.79 compared to 237,288.18 in 2025-25 a 21.28% increase**
- Chico State Athletic Training had over 3,335 reported student-athlete interactions accounting for more than 10,000 contact hours with the Athletic Training Staff and other associated health care professionals.
- Chico State Strength & Conditioning delivered more than 32,000 student-athlete contact hours through team training sessions, open gym access, and certified strength and conditioning support. Additional student athlete support services yielded nearly 1,000 total student contact hours.

  <u>Additional student-athlete support and campus collaborations included:</u>
  - Sports Nutrition delivered over 240 student-athlete contact hours through 24 individual sessions, 4 team workshops, and 3 department-wide events.
  - Sport Psychology, in partnership with Kinesiology, delivered 118 student-athlete contact hours and 4 team workshops.
  - Strength & Conditioning provided certified open gym support for the Sports Club Program, totaling 420 club sport student-athlete contact hours.
  - Wildcat Pantry delivered 3 pop-up pantry events in Acker Gym, providing nutritional support for hundreds of students and student-athletes across the fall and spring semesters.
  - CalFresh campus outreach conducted a sign-up event for Athletics that included more than 30 applicants and 24 approvals, yielding approximately $86,000 in nutritional support for student-athletes.
  - Nursing provided the support of 5 students who assisted with the promotion and execution of Athletics department nutrition events, including department nutrition education seminars and CalFresh tabling events.
    - These collaborations strengthened the student-athlete experience, supported holistic care, and created applied professional development opportunities for nearly 20 graduate and undergraduate students.
  - Athletics continued foundational work toward a more integrated Health & Performance model through policy and procedure development, operational alignment, and collaboration among Strength & Conditioning, Athletic Training, and the Wellcat Health Center.

IV. Integrate Unit Objectives with Strategic Action Plan in 2025-26

- Referencing the new Student Affairs Strategic Plan, identify *one* outcome from each of the Value Propositions that your area will implement in 2025-26. The outcome must be measurable.

    - **Proudly Owning Who We Are**
        - As a nationally ranked NCAA Division II program, consistently in the top 100 and top two in the CCAA, we will address our competitive potential by developing a comprehensive facility improvement plan. This plan will include targeted fundraising campaigns and the pursuit of public-private partnerships to secure resources necessary to elevate our programs to national championship contention in every sport. Outcome Measure: Completion of the facility improvement plan by May 2026, with at least two formal funding proposals submitted to potential partners. We have made some progress on this goal with the new student-success center, and team room spaces in Acker. (continued for 2026-27)
    - **Leveraging Our Strengths in What We Do**
        - We will build a sustainable, community-driven fundraising and revenue model to support the long-term success of Chico State Athletics. This initiative will focus on investing in our 320+ student-athletes, expanding alumni engagement, and enhancing both the game day and donor experience—reflecting the spirit of our theme: Wildcats Today. Tomorrow. Forever. Outcome Measure: Achieve a 25% increase in total annual fundraising revenue and a 25% increase in active donor participation by June 2026. Goal partially me there was a 21% increase. (continued for 2026-27)

    - **Advancing Our Influence by How We Do Our Work**
        - We will strengthen internal communication, accountability, and operational structure to enhance departmental performance. This includes clarifying roles and responsibilities, improving information flow across all levels, and restructuring reporting lines for greater efficiency and sustainability. Outcome Measure: Implement new reporting structure by January 2026 and conduct a department-wide survey, with at least 80% of staff reporting improved clarity in responsibilities and communication. (continued for 2026-27)