



## IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING SCHEDULES FOR FALL SPORTS

Dear Knights,

We are so excited to welcome you back to Southern Virginia University!

As you may know, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has created a lot of uncertainty around collegiate athletics this fall. The NCAA, as well as their partner conferences across all divisions, have grappled with the best way to sponsor fall athletics while protecting our student-athletes, as well as our larger campus communities, from the spread of the virus.

With this question in mind, the Capital Athletic Conference today elected to postpone—*rather than cancel*—intercollegiate competition and championships for the following fall sports: men's and women's soccer, men's and women's cross country, field hockey, and women's volleyball. Likewise, the Old Dominion Athletic Conference, our conference affiliate for football, today also elected to postpone its football season until January 1, 2021.

We support these proactive steps taken by our conference partners to protect student-athletes and campus communities and, while nothing is certain in this “new normal,” we fully expect—*and are already working with our conference partners*—to resume regular competitions for the affected fall sports in the upcoming Spring 2021 Semester. Based on the tremendous current pace of medical research and development, we are optimistic about the future, and expect in the next few months to see important advances in COVID-19 testing technology, treatments, and vaccines that can all have a major positive impact for restarting athletics early next year.

As we like to say at Southern Virginia University, “**There is always opportunity in adversity.**” We can already see many new opportunities in this revised schedule for fall athletics, including:

### OFFSEASON PRACTICES AND SCRIMMAGES

For the fall sports affected by this postponement, we will flip the traditional off-season spring component of the sport to the fall season. That means competitive practices, inter-squad scrimmages, strength training, and team building activities for these sports will happen in the fall semester and will be more important than ever. In other words, this fall will provide a unique opportunity for teams and student-athletes to improve and prepare to compete in the spring—and to get ready for our best athletic year ever!

### ACADEMIC FOCUS

Without the typical demanding fall competition schedules, this upcoming semester will allow our student-athletes to focus completely on their academics. The Division III philosophy places “the highest priority on the overall quality of the educational experience and on the successful completion of all students’ academic programs.” Please keep your plans to attend school this fall where you will improve yourself through education, learn from our amazing professors in small, safe classes, and continue progressing toward graduation.

### PROTECTING OUR CAMPUS COMMUNITY

Postponing fall sports until the spring will help protect our campus community during this unprecedented semester—especially those individuals who are at high-risk and most vulnerable to infection. Eliminating travel between campuses for competitions, and the close contact inherent to many of these sports, will enhance our efforts to safeguard our campus from the virus. Postponing competitions will also allow us to utilize more of the spaces in our athletics facilities for important social distancing measures across campus.

In short, postponing fall sports until the spring will help prevent and minimize exposure to COVID-19 across our campus—and therefore it is the right thing for us to do as student-athletes and good citizens of our campus community.

Although there is still some uncertainty about decisions that the NCAA and our conference partners have made, or could still make, concerning collegiate athletics, Southern Virginia University is completely committed to finding ways for all of our teams to have successful, fulfilling experiences this fall and beyond. Together, we will continue to explore options that will enable our student-athletes to continue to engage and actively participate in their sports and to improve as athletes and individuals, as long as we can do so safely and responsibly.

We'll need to be resourceful, think outside the box, and all work together this fall—but those are some of the things we do best. In many ways, athletics is about developing character as much as any physical abilities. This global pandemic is a unique opportunity to come together as a community to protect each other and showcase the toughness, grit, and determination we have worked hard to develop in our athletic endeavors. This will be a semester unlike any other and we invite all of you to come participate on our campus as we work to make this one of the safest places you could possibly be for the next few months.

Go Knights!!!

Deidra Dryden  
VP, Director of Athletics

P.S. Your respective coaches will reach out soon to share specific details and information about their plans for the fall, including schedules and arrival dates.