

# Saving Akron Men's Cross Country – Three Tangible Arguments

## Argument 1: Net Financial Benefit to the University through Men's Cross Country

In collaboration with Andy Schwarz, an anti-trust economist with a sub-specialty in the economics of college sports, a preliminary analysis of men's cross country and the financial benefit it provides to the university is summarized below.

### Adjustments to Costs

Listed Operating Expenses ( <i>net of scholarships</i> )	\$	7,900
Plus Costs of Education/Housing/Food for 15 students	\$	53,016
<b>Adjusted Costs</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>60,916</b>

### Adjustments to Revenues

Listed Revenues	\$	-
Gross Tuition/R&B/Books Revenue paid by 15 students	\$	186,008
<i>less discounts (athletic scholarships)</i>	\$	(32,625)
Net Tuition Revenue paid by 15 students	\$	153,382
State Credits for Courses & Degrees	\$	61,955
Estimated NCAA Distributions	\$	43,700
<b>Adjusted Revenues</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>259,037</b>

<b>Net Benefit (Cost) of Cross Country PER YEAR</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>198,121</b>
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A more detailed analysis, including the assumptions used to generate the analysis, can be found at the following link:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1uLeYJ1u1UUj91BChGv65gck9aikG2uW7>

The data used in this analysis came from the latest NCAA Membership Financial Report for the University of Akron from the 2018-19 school year.

We believe this yearly net benefit projection to be a conservative estimate.

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## Addendum to Argument 1: Understanding the Sources of Revenue brought by Students

There are four main ways a tuition-paying student at the University of Akron brings in revenue to the school:

1. Tuition, 2. Room and board, 3. Resident degree credit, 4. Course completion credits

For this analysis, the following assumptions have been applied:

- a. Non-scholarship student-athlete\*
- b. The student-athlete is considered an Ohio resident
- c. One year of room and board
- d. Student graduates after four years at the university with 120 credits completed

1. Tuition – the yearly amount paid to the university by a student to attend the institution
2. Room and board – the yearly amount paid to the university by a student to live on campus and eat at the dining halls. There are different levels of housing and meal plans which can change the room and board amount, but this is the amount reported on the university's website.
3. Resident degree credit\*\* – this is the amount given to the university by the state of Ohio for each in-state degree earned. Attainment of a degree by an out of state student also earns the university a degree credit, but at a lesser dollar amount.
4. Course completion credits\*\* – this is the amount given to the university by the state of Ohio for 120 completed credits. Below you will see \$2181 multiplied by 4: this is because the state of Ohio works in 30 credit increments, referred to as 1.0 full-time equivalent or FTE.

Tuition	<b>4 x \$11,635 = \$46,540</b>
Room and board	<b>\$11,220</b>
Resident degree credit	<b>\$10,837</b>
Course completion credits	<b>4 x \$2181 = <u>\$8,724</u></b>

**\$77,321 total per student**

\*The non-scholarship assumption was made because the majority of cross country runners do not have a track scholarship. For the 2020 projected cross country roster, a total of 1.2 track scholarships were allocated amongst the runners. It is worth noting, there is no such thing as a cross country scholarship when there is a track program, so cutting cross country does not alleviate a scholarship funding burden.

\*\*In 2014 the state of Ohio enacted a performance funding model for publicly funded institutions of higher learning. Instead of receiving funds simply for the number of students on campus, the funds are now allocated based on how the students on campus perform. The two main components of that funding model are the resident degree credit and the course completion credits listed above.

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## Argument 2: Title IX Numbers through the Years – Prong 1

Survey Year	Mens Undergrad %	Womens Undergrad %	Mens Sports %	Womens Sports %	Difference
2020*	54.28	45.72	55.80	44.20	1.50
2019	54.28	45.72	57.47	42.53	3.17
2018	54.28	45.72	56.71	43.29	2.43
2017	54.42	45.58	56.31	43.69	1.89
2016	55.08	44.92	54.61	45.39	-0.47
2015	54.12	45.88	55.22	44.78	1.09
2014	53.43	46.57	58.97	41.03	5.54
2013	53.08	46.92	58.48	41.52	5.40
2012	53.11	46.89	60.58	39.42	7.47
2011	52.96	47.04	61.46	38.54	8.50
2010	52.65	47.35	59.63	40.37	6.98

Title IX has three prongs through which a university can show compliance when it comes to athletics. The first prong is the most straightforward and that is that the competitive, or proportional, opportunities between men and women in athletics must match that of full-time undergraduate enrollment. The table above shows a year to year comparison of the undergraduate percentages between men and women and the men and women's competitive opportunities percentages. The 2010 – 2018 data was pulled from the Equity in Athletics Database. The 2019 data was compiled from GoZips.com and it was assumed the undergraduate enrolment percentages between men and women were unchanged.

It is understood that cross country athletes are counted three times in the proportional opportunities count, once for each of their three seasons. The 2020 projected numbers include that methodology as well.

\*2020 year is a projection based on the following:

1. Start with 2019 roster data from GoZips.com
2. Subtract 2019 men's golf and 2019 women's tennis roster numbers
3. Amend track roster data to reflect realized increase in women's roster numbers
4. KEEP 2019 men's cross country roster numbers
5. Assume undergraduate enrolment percentages between men and women are unchanged

No drastic difference in compliance would be manufactured by the elimination of men's cross country.

Roster management is the tried and true method when it comes to balancing Title IX compliance. Roster management is the act of limiting men's roster sizes and adding women to the roster in order to increase the competitive opportunities for the underrepresented sex.

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## Argument 3: The Importance of Cross Country to Winning Track Team Titles

In the NCAA DI classification there are 290 men's track and field programs: only 6 of those schools don't sponsor cross country.

The following table summarizes how those track programs performed in their outdoor conference championships in 2019:

	2019 Outdoor Conference	
	Team Finish	Pts Scored 800 - 10,000m
Alabama A&M	Did not compete	0
Cal State-Bakersfield	6 of 8	10
U. of Southern Miss	5 of 10	0
U. of Maryland	13 of 13	0
U. of S. Carolina	10 of 13	6
USC	5 of 10	10
Akron	1 of 6	30

Having a cross country team is a vital component to having a successful track and field team. There are five distance events in the outdoor conference meet and without a cross country team the ability to recruit distance runners diminishes to near-zero. That essentially eliminates any chance of winning a conference title.

Last year, the Akron men's distance runners scored 25 points on the way to Akron's overall victory at the men's conference championship meet.

- Since 2010, the men have won 6 outdoor conference titles.
- They have garnered an average of 29.5 points from the distance events.
- 5 of the 6 wins would have gone to another team without the points from the distance events.