



UNC Charlotte Football Feasibility Committee
Athletic Director Survey

The questions that were asked to each Athletic Director in order are:

1. What is your perspective on the implementation of the Football program (or lack of implementation)?
2. What were the consequences both intended and unintended with the implementation of football (or lack of implementation)?
3. Is there any advice that you would give as UNC Charlotte studies football?

A. UAB – Brian Mackin, Athletic Director

1. At UAB, the President wanted football to help meet the university's mission, therefore he supported (and current president does also) football with supplemental funding from the university. In the state of Alabama, the division of football you play is very important. (I-A) Conference Affiliation is very important. Identify who you want to be associated with. For UAB, it was important to be in a league with Southern Mississippi and Memphis, so Conference USA is a great fit.
2. Unintended Consequences – On the front-end there was a miscommunication with the Trustees in regard to the goals of adding football. There is a need to have ownership from the "top down"----- total buy in. UAB has that now, but not sure we (UAB) did originally.
Intended Consequences – Start football, D I level and have a conference affiliation. Now we are "a complete" athletic program with football, that serves all sports. Conference USA is the perfect fit for us.
3. Advice: What Joe Gottfried did at South Alabama was smart.....had a plan to sell a minimum # of season tickets prior to committing to start football. UAB just jumped in with no plan. You need a plan due to economic impact unless your President/Chancellor will subsidize the program at \$4-4.5 million per year. I know you are aware of Title IX consequences.
Talk with marketing folks. We deal with ISP now-suggest you go external. We increased revenue from \$200,000 to \$1.4 million after we used external firm.

B. University of South Florida – Doug Woolard, Athletic Director

1. Football provided a platform for the university to fulfill its mission. It has allowed for optimal branding of the university which we were really unable to do before. We are such a young university – only 50 years old with athletics being only 35 years old. Conference affiliation is important. Exposure!! Being part of a BCS conference has raised the level and opportunities to associate with peer institutions. We partner

- with the peer institutions academically also.
2. Unintended Consequences – Underestimated the “on-going” financial commitment to just keep pace in the Big East. Three years ago the athletic Budget at USF was \$18 million. Today it is \$30 million and we are \$10 million less than the average in the Big East. Scholarship cost differs greatly throughout league, so the differential may be skewed.
Intended Consequences – Branding of this university; visibility; national recognition. We have 45,000 students and have always been considered a commuter school. Football has allowed us to break away from that image. It has given both the university and the community something to identify with. Basketball, alone, can’t do that.
 3. Advice: Where would you play? Need to be I-A as quickly as possible. USF seldom plays buy games, but we did play at Auburn for \$650,000 and we beat them.
Without football, we wouldn’t be in the Big East Conference. If South Florida hadn’t done this several years ago (added football). People know where South Florida is now....in Tampa. Before they didn’t know and thought Miami or the Keys. We have received great coverage in USA Today.
Football dollars from marketing \$350,000 from ESPNR – with IMG now \$1.5 million. Annual deals with Underarmor - \$500,000 for football, baseball, and softball.

C. University of South Alabama – Joe Gottfried, Athletic Director

1. We elected to not add football mainly because the timing wasn’t right. The Athletic Director was the only one involved; there was no budget for a study or committee. There are plans to “revisit” the issue next week (9-17-07). Previously, our new President had just arrived and the Trustees were older; there was no support from either.
Athletic Director started a season ticket campaign to judge interest of community. Upfront stated that in order to proceed any further, must have commitment for 6000 season tickets, indicating that number would reveal real interest; only had 3000 respond with interest .
2. Consequences – Comments from university administration stating “we can’t afford football...only 15 schools in country make money.”
Tough being in the state of Alabama, which is a huge football state and not being one of the schools participating.
A stadium currently exists in Mobile that could be used.....LADD Peebles Stadium seats 43,000. It is used for the Senior Bowl and one other. (A very nice facility).
3. Biggest concern is where will we (those of us in D I without football) be in the next 5 years? If we don’t have football, we will be left out of the mix. Charlotte should be able to make a strong run to be a member of the Big East Conference because of your location, market size, and university.

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Provost Survey Results

UAB

The Provost commented that it seems to take a very long time to build a fan base. Attendance at games fluctuates with the wins and loses. He thinks that the size of the market is really important. Birmingham doesn't have a professional team. There is a lot of allegiance to Alabama and Auburn football and UAB can't really compete with them for interest. UAB has about 15,000 students total and a much smaller alumni base than Alabama or Auburn. But there is a real struggle in the state around student recruitment and with a generally younger student body, UAB has been trying to create a more traditional campus atmosphere. He did not have any comments on the impact of football on the academic programs except to say that having a marching band had been helpful to the music program. Other than speaking favorably about how the band was a cohesive group and seemed to function like a learning community, he didn't have much to say about what football had actually contributed to student recruitment or the student experience. He had no comments on scholarships, fund raising or financing. UAB plays in Legion Field which is now old and in need of repair. UAB doesn't have space on campus for a stadium.

University of South Alabama

About 7-8 years ago in response to pressure from students and local politicians/supporters, they commissioned Barr and Associates to do a study about football. USA has about 14,000 students and Mobile has a stadium seating 46,000 that would be available for play. Barr and Associates reported that they would lose approximately \$8 million in their first 6 years even with an increase of \$100/year in the student activity fee (\$2.5M). Because of persistent interest in football, they agreed to consider it if alumni and others in the city were willing to buy 6,000 season tickets. They sold 500. They have about 30,000 alumni in the area but the feeling is that those alumni grew up as Alabama or Auburn fans and wooing them away from those games to watch USA play Valdosta State or Samford wasn't going to happen. They are the only senior institution in the state without a football team and there is still some level of interest in a football program, but the students have recently agreed to an increase in the student activity fee for a student recreation center and it is not clear that they can sustain another fee increase of the magnitude needed for a football program to be successful.

University of South Florida

The program has been in operation for 11 years. The faculty opposed it strenuously and the Faculty Senate voted against starting a program on two separate occasions. The disagreement was resolved when some boosters put \$10million into an account so that if football went into the red, it would not drain any academic programs. Some money from Academic Affairs has still gone into support of the football program: specifically, scholarship money, advising support money, beefed up support for academic integrity, and funds for an athletic training facility. The latter occurred when the university took the money from vending to cover the debt service on bonds for the building. This money had previously been discretionary money for the colleges. Because of objections, boosters raised \$300K for the building, but this does not cover the costs. Continuing disputes revolve around pressure from athletics to give students admissions waivers. This has been resolved by the Provost allowing a specific number of waivers for athletes to be used in any sport. Athletics does not believe that they can be really competitive under these conditions, but apparently, they live with it. Overall, the Provost believes football has been good for the university. Since they joined the Big East, SAT scores have gone up as they have recruited more out of state students from NJ and NY. Fundraising for football has not interfered with academic or other fundraising. It is still about 8% of the total. When football was started, annual giving was \$20 million. It has gone up to \$75 million, but the proportion going to athletics hasn't changed.

USF uses the Tampa Bay Bucs stadium and get about 8,000 students attending (out of 45,000). About 30,000-40,000 attend home games. At \$20/ticket, it is seen as a good family outing. They get nothing from parking or concessions and they have to pay for the attendants—so the economics are not too favorable and they feel they need to renegotiate. They are considering building their own stadium. The Provost believes that the reason for the program's success is that Tampa is a huge media market—12th in the US. When Miami left the Big East, it opened up opportunity for USF and ESPN and others were eager to work with them when they joined the Big East. Before that, things seemed to have been less sanguine