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### Armstrong State University Athletics to End Intercollegiate Competition Following 2016-17 Season

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# Armstrong State University Athletics to End Intercollegiate Competition Following 2016-17 Season

MARCH 7, 2017

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## PRESS RELEASE

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**Armstrong State University Athletics to End Intercollegiate Competition Following 2016-17**

## Season

Today, the Armstrong State University/Georgia Southern University Athletics Operational Working Group announced that it will recommend to the Consolidation Implementation Committee (CIC) that intercollegiate competition end at Armstrong State University following the current 2016-17 athletic year.

Several factors have led to the recommendation; most important, the health and safety of student athletes. Due to changes in athletics rosters that have already occurred, most sports will no longer have enough student-athletes to adequately support a full season, placing remaining student athletes in potentially harmful playing situations.

"This was a very difficult decision, but it is in the best interest of our student-athletes," said Lisa Sweany, Armstrong's athletic director. "This decision is being made now so that student-athletes and staff can focus on their future and what is in their best interest. I'm very proud of what our student-athletes, coaches and administrators have accomplished during my time at Armstrong."

Women's soccer, women's volleyball, men's and women's cross country and men's and women's basketball have completed their championship segments and will not participate in further intercollegiate competition. Baseball, softball, men's and women's tennis and men's and women's golf are currently in season and will each finish their 2017 spring semester of competition.

By discontinuing Armstrong's athletics programs at the conclusion of the 2016-17 athletic year, any student-athlete who elects to transfer at the end of the Spring 2017 semester can apply the dropped sport exception, which allows them to compete immediately, without sitting a year in residency.

As decided by the Consolidation Implementation Committee on March 3, all athletics-related scholarships for affected student athletes will be honored, provided students are making satisfactory academic progress. This plan will allow student-athletes who are affected by the consolidation to continue their education without bearing an additional financial burden.

The Athletics Operational Working Group is working on the recommended structure of the new Georgia Southern University Athletic Department. Armstrong coaches and administrators will continue to have roles through December 2017.

"All of our student athletes, coaches and athletics staff are valued members of our Armstrong family," said Armstrong President Linda M. Bleicken. "We are working with them to create outcomes that are as positive as possible."

Pending approval of the recommendation by the CIC to end Armstrong athletics, the current 2016-17 season will culminate 50 years of Pirate athletics.

Armstrong State University has earned a reputation as one of the premier NCAA Division II departments in the nation. Over the past five decades, Pirate athletics teams have earned 13 national championships, 96 Peach Belt Conference championships, 139 NCAA Championships appearances and 296 All-Americans.

On Jan. 11, 2017, the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia voted to consolidate Armstrong State University and Georgia Southern University, ultimately creating a new Georgia Southern University with three campus locations in Savannah, Hinesville and Statesboro. Consolidation Implementation Committee members, Functional Area co-chairs and Operational Working Groups uniting Armstrong and Georgia Southern faculty and staff are currently examining and working through all aspects of the consolidation.

For updates regarding the consolidation between Georgia Southern University and Armstrong State University, please visit [consolidation.georgiasouthern.edu](http://consolidation.georgiasouthern.edu).

**ABOUT ARMSTRONG STATE UNIVERSITY:**

[Armstrong State University](http://Armstrong State University), part of the University System of Georgia, was founded in 1935. Today, the university offers more than 100 undergraduate and graduate academic programs in the College of Liberal Arts, the College of Science and Technology, the College of Education and the College of Health Professions. Armstrong serves approximately 7,100 students at its main campus in Savannah and at a regional center in Hinesville. The university's diverse student population comes from 43 states, the District of Columbia and 67 countries. Visit [Armstrong.edu](http://Armstrong.edu).

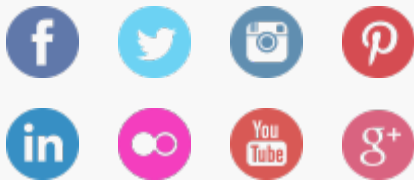
**ABOUT GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY:**

[Georgia Southern University](http://Georgia Southern University), a public Carnegie Doctoral/Research University founded in 1906, offers more than 125 degree programs serving 20,673 students. Through eight colleges, the University offers bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programs built on more than a century of academic achievement. Georgia Southern is recognized for its student-centered and hands-on approach to education. Visit [GeorgiaSouthern.edu](http://GeorgiaSouthern.edu).

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