

PATRIOT LEAGUE FOOTBALL
Financial Aid Decision—February 2012
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What factors encouraged the Presidents to make this decision on football financial aid?

- Objective was to reach a decision for the best interests of the League
- Stability of the League and strengthening its future
- Positioning the League to expand its membership with attractive institutions
- Consistent with League's permissive policy for all other 22 League sports

With the adoption of a permissive financial aid policy for football, will the League's admission requirements be changed in any way?

No. However, we believe that the opportunity to award athletic grant-in-aid will enhance the pool of highly qualified football student-athletes for League institutions. The League's commitment to high academic standards will continue to be a hallmark of the League and we expect that our graduation rates for football and other sports will remain among the top in the country. Patriot League institutions believe as strongly as ever that the academic and athletic values can be, and must be compatible.

Why is this new approach to financial aid for football not available until next year?

Given that schools are in the midst of a recruiting cycle, the implementation of this model for the class entering in the fall of 2013 allows each institution to develop their financial aid plan and for the coaching staffs to make appropriate adjustments to their recruiting strategies.

[Note: This approach is similar to that used when basketball athletic merit aid was instituted. In December 1996, the League adopted a policy to permit athletic merit aid for men and women's basketball beginning with the class that entered in the fall of 1998.]

Is there a limit on the amount of football financial merit aid a school is permitted to award each year?

To initiate this model of permissive aid, for the classes entering in the fall of 2013 and 2014, not more than 15 equivalencies per year of countable athletic aid or a total of 30 equivalencies over the two-year period shall be awarded to incoming football student-athletes, including transfers. At all times, the total amount of all financial aid awarded to all football student-athletes shall not exceed 60 equivalencies.

Will currently enrolled student-athletes be eligible to receive athletic merit aid?

No, only student-athletes who enroll beginning in the fall of 2013 will be eligible. Student-athletes already enrolled in a Patriot League institution will continue to be eligible to receive need-based athletic aid or academic merit aid.

What are the positive results that come from the decision to allow athletic merit aid for the sport of football?

There are numerous positive outcomes following this decision

- Allows the League to maintain, and perhaps enhance, its academic profile with the recruitment of outstanding students who are also talented athletes

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- Provides each institution the opportunity to control and manage their financial aid resources in a fiscally prudent manner

How does this impact Fordham's status with the League, both short-term and long-term?

During this transition period, Fordham has continued to compete as a member of Patriot League football. Later this spring, a decision will be made regarding when they again will become eligible for the League championship and NCAA automatic qualifier slot. Fordham began offering athletic merit aid to football student-athletes with the class entering in the fall of 2010 and currently has two classes receiving athletic merit aid.

What are the League's plans for expansion now that football athletic merit aid has been adopted?

The League will now be able to direct its attention to potential membership growth. We anticipate that this change in policy will make the Patriot League a more attractive destination for potential expansion candidates for both football-only and all-sport members.

How will this decision impact the image of Patriot League football both on a regional and national basis?

With athletic merit aid, we see the opportunity to enhance non-League scheduling with attractive and academically-minded institutions, which in turn will help to increase the visibility of Patriot League schools. It will also open up the opportunity to schedule teams that in the past would not have scheduled a Patriot League institution.

Will Patriot League schools start to play Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) schools as part of their non-League schedule?

This is an institutional decision depending on the amount of countable athletic aid awarded and the attractiveness of opportunities available. Two Patriot League teams -- Colgate and Fordham -- faced FBS teams during the past two years. Other games versus FBS opponents are scheduled in future years. [Note: *Colgate played at Syracuse in 2010 and Fordham played at Army and Connecticut in 2011.*]

Will schools still award need-limited financial aid for incoming and current football student-athletes?

Yes, it will continue to be an institutional decision on how financial aid is distributed for all of their athletic programs.

Does this have any impact on other sports within the Patriot League?

This will vary from institution to institution. With the implementation of this financial aid model, or should a school add to its current financial aid budget for football, it would need to make a proportional amount of athletic aid and/or funds available to women's sports. League members remain committed to the principles of gender equity across their men and women's sport programs.