# President’s Athletics Task Force

## Lacrosse Subcommittee

As part of the President’s Athletics Task Force, a subcommittee was convened to assess the feasibility of starting a non-varsity club lacrosse program at Wichita State University.

## POSITIVE FACTORS

### Infrastructure exists

Wichita State Campus Recreation is well-versed in managing non-varsity sports clubs of this type and maintains a $30,000 budget line for the university’s 12 existing sports clubs. Campus Rec also manages the lighted playing fields at the Hughes Metropolitan Complex, that could serve as a home for the team until such time as a renovated stadium would open for competition.

### Regional Competition Options

Regionally, teams in our area play under the banner of the Men's Collegiate Lacrosse Association (MCLA). The MCLA consists of eight non-varsity college lacrosse conferences featuring over 160 teams across 42 states and two countries. The association provides a governing structure similar to the NCAA, consisting of eligibility rules, national awards, polls, and championship tournaments.

Should Wichita State participate in the MCLA they would likely compete in the [Lone Star Alliance](https://mcla.us/conference/lsa) at the Division II level. Team in that division include several historical rivals, (notably Kansas State, Oklahoma State, Creighton and Missouri State) and many of the schools are within a day’s driving distance of Wichita.

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| **LONE STAR ALLIANCE DIVISION II TEAMS** |
| Dallas Baptist | Washington University (Mo.) |
| Kansas State | Louisiana |
| Oklahoma State | Southeastern Louisiana |
| UT-Dallas | Tulane |
| Creighton | Baylor |
| Missouri State | Rice |
| UT-San Antonio | TAMU-Galveston |
| Saint Louis University |  |

## NEGATIVE FACTORS

The negative factors are centered around the expense of starting a program; and the uncertainty of level of interest.

### Startup costs

Campus Recreation estimates that the startup costs at $17,000 (see last page for a breakdown). Of that amount, it could only provide $2,100 to pay for uniforms, travel to road games and hiring officials. Should the club qualify for regional or national championship tournaments, a separate budget line item would support limited travel costs. Because of the financial limitation of the department, players would have provide much of their own equipment and likely pay for some travel costs, as well.

### Little regional history with the sport

Lacrosse is not a well-known sport in the south-central Kansas region. The sport is not sanctioned by the Kansas State High School Athletic Association. Of the 20 or so high school programs in the state, most are located in the Kansas City Metropolitan Statistical Area and only two schools – Wichita Bishop Carroll High School and Andover High School – field teams locally. The appeal of the program from a recruiting standpoint would therefore be outside of the area and largely outside the state. How strong of a draw the sport might be for recruitment is unclear.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The subcommittee concluded that lacrosse could be feasible as a club sport, but only if players are willing to pay to play.

The subcommittee recommends the following steps be taken:

* Lacrosse should be offered as an option for fall on a trial basis to determine the level of interest among current students, identify potential club leaders to organize recruitment and fundraising and build the foundation of the program.
* Campus Recreation should reach out to the MCLA to express the intentions of the university to start a program and determine the requirements for entry.
* To mitigate risk, the above two steps should be undertaken prior to any university expenditures on equipment.

 