

**CENTRAL
ARKANSAS**

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***ANNUAL REPORT
FISCAL YEAR 2023***



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ANNUAL REPORT FISCAL YEAR 2023



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Dear Bear Nation,

This past academic year was impactful for our program. We continue to compete at a high level in all sports and meet the challenges of the ever-changing landscape of college athletics in Division I of the NCAA. We also know that there is much more change to come and we will adapt so that we continue to meet the needs of our student-athletes and coaches.

We continued to have large roster sizes in all sports to assist with enrollment at UCA. We have added many non-scholarship student-athletes to our rosters. We started the sport of STUNT this year to bring more females to our program. You will be amazed when you see this sport. It is four quarters of excitement!

Our second year in the ASUN Conference was great. The institutions represented and the administrators at each have similar priorities and visions for their programs. Our students enjoy competing at these locations and venues. Also, all football programs in the ASUN and the football programs in the WAC formed a new conference for football only called the United Athletics Conference (UAC). This gives us 10 programs that we will compete against in football. It allowed the ASUN and the WAC to focus on football without disrupting the many other sports each conference sponsors.

We finished the implementation of our ESPN platform adding volleyball, soccer, and softball. This year we produced over 100 broadcasts of our games on ESPN. This has further elevated our brand and allowed our fans around the world to watch outstanding productions of the Bears and Sugar Bears.

We continue to see great accomplishments among our student-athletes. Student-Athletes graduated 21 percentage points higher than the general student body, which is a metric the NCAA reviews closely. It puts UCA Athletics in a great position.

At UCA, we embrace the NCAA DI principles of Academic Integrity, Rules and Governance, Financial Prudence, and Student-Athlete Well-being. These characteristics shape our program as we excel at providing a great place to live, learn, and compete. UCA is a total package program. We succeed in academics, socially, and with life skills, while winning championships. Our goal is to provide a wonderful educational experience for our student-athletes which is further enhanced through athletics success. The fondest memories come from our great teams and programs. We want all to have that experience.

As we enter our 18th year in Division I, and our third in the ASUN, our image continues to be very important to our success. Through our branding, facilities, and media; our image is impacted. We will ensure our image elicits a perception of a first-class program. We have been successful due to the re-branding of our logos and trademarks. We have been successful due to our abundant facility improvements since our move to Division I. We have been successful due to our forethought in social media and communications. We have been successful due to our staff's creativity and innovation. And we have been successful due to our willingness to take risks and go against the norms.

UCA Athletics is committed to providing a rewarding student-athlete experience, an enjoyable fan/donor experience, and a professional and classy image. We will do this while contributing to the university's educational experiences. UCA Athletics cherishes the role it plays on this great educational campus of UCA. Athletics will AVIDly provide a rewarding and enriching experience for the diverse group of students and coaches, leading to excellence and accountability in the classroom, on campus, and in their sport.

GO BEARS! GO SUGAR BEARS!



Brad Teague, Ph. D.
Director of Athletics

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MISSION

To AVIDly provide a rewarding and enriching experience for students and coaches leading to excellence and accountability in the classroom, on campus and in their sport.

**AVID - UCA dedicates itself to Academic
Vitality, Integrity, and Diversity**

CORE VALUES

1. Student-Athlete Success
2. Excellence
3. Accountability
4. Innovation
5. Collegiality

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Student-Athlete Experience
2. Fan/Donor Experience
3. Program Image

COACHING EVALUATION

1. Recruiting
2. Academics
3. Athletics
4. Administrative
5. Compliance
6. Student-Athlete Well-Being
7. Public Relations



Athletics programs utilize several metrics to evaluate the success of their student-athletes in academics. Grade Point Average (GPA), Graduation Success Rate (GSR), Federal Graduation Rate (FGR), Academic Progress Rate (APR) and Completed Athletics Eligibility Graduation Rate (CEGR) are all part of the evaluation system. As detailed below, UCA turned in an overall cumulative GPA of 3.19. UCA also has an FGR 21 points greater than the student body, had its seventh consecutive year with an APR above 980 and has maintained a department-wide 3.0+ GPA for 11 consecutive years.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
• GPA													
Women	3.16	3.18	3.19	3.28	3.28	3.32	3.35	3.40	3.37	3.43	3.44	3.51	3.49
Men	2.79	2.82	2.88	2.87	2.88	2.88	2.98	3.02	3.04	3.08	3.02	3.02	2.97
Total	2.94	2.98	3.02	3.04	3.04	3.10	3.14	3.18	3.19	3.22	3.19	3.22	3.19
• GSR													
Women	86%	95%	82%	83%	73%	81%	89%	88%	90%	93%	92%	96%	95%
Men	68%	75%	67%	66%	69%	70%	73%	74%	69%	71%	77%	79%	84%
Total	74%	81%	73%	72%	74%	75%	80%	80%	78%	80%	83%	86%	89%
• FGR													
Women	55%	58%	50%	49%	66%	60%	64%	65%	65%	79%	76%	68%	68%
Men	50%	43%	43%	42%	65%	56%	49%	51%	45%	61%	56%	66%	74%
Total	53%	50%	47%	46%	65%	58%	56%	58%	54%	68%	64%	67%	71%
Student Body	42%	41%	41%	41%	45%	45%	42%	43%	42%	43%	45%	49%	50%
• APR													
Women	964	988	972	990	980	997	987	986	994	994	990	992	#
Men	957	952	939	933	971	971	980	980	978	982	969	984	#
Total	960	971	957	963	976	985	984	984	987	989	981	989	#
• CEGR													
Total	93%	96%	100%	94%	99%	97%	99%	97%	93%	95%	96%	99%	#

Graduation Success Rate (GSR) - no cohort - transfers count

Federal Graduation Rate (FGR) - freshman cohort

Academic Progress Rate (APR) - NCAA metric - Retention and academic eligibility

Completed Athletics Eligibility Grad Rate (CEGR) N=60

Official in October each year



COMPLIANCE

- 1. The most important part of Compliance is that all individuals associated with UCA Athletics promote and support the interest of the athletic department to ensure full compliance with NCAA, ASUN Conference and University Rules.***
- 2. Increased rules education and updates to coaches, staff, boosters, and student-athletes. These updates occur in a variety of ways from face to face, email blasts, website notices, and individual meetings with coaches or student athletes.***
- 3. Conversion to e-filing system for all student-athlete records.***
- 4. Financial Aid can enter student-athlete data without the assistance of athletics staff.***
- 5. Implementation of ARMS to make tracking many aspects of Compliance easier for coaches as well as the compliance office.***
- 6. Compliance staff and general counsel will continue semi-annual meetings.***

FACILITY ENHANCEMENTS

- 1. New video rooms were added for indoor volleyball, beach volleyball in summer of 2023.***
- 2. A replay system and new scoreboards were installed in the Prince Center for Indoor Volleyball.***
- 3. New chairs in the video room for Women's Basketball in the summer of 2023.***
- 4. New signage at Beach Bear Volleyball Courts in spring 2023.***
- 5. New outfield wall at Bear Stadium baseball stadium in Fall 2022.***
- 6. New office and locker room area for Men's and Women's Track and Field in summer of 2023.***
- 7. A new customized van was purchased for the Men's and Women's Golf teams in the fall of 2023.***

ON-CAMPUS EVENTS HOSTING

- 1. Hosted the Arkansas Activities Association High School State Championships in baseball, softball and soccer at Estes Stadium, Bear Stadium and Farris Field in May 2023. Those championships were televised statewide on Arkansas PBS.***
- 2. Arkansas Activities Association All-Star Week, which includes high school All-Star games for football, boy's and girl's basketball, boy's and girl's soccer, volleyball, baseball, softball and cheer and dance student-athletes from around the state was hosted on the UCA campus in June 2023.***
- 3. Numerous high school and youth baseball tournaments were held at Bear Stadium, UCA's baseball facility.***
- 4. Hosted the Top 5 ranked University of Arkansas Razorbacks in a softball matchup at Farris Field for the third consecutive season and drew a record crowd of nearly 2,500 fans.***



● PURPLE CIRCLE ANNUAL FUND

The Purple Circle is the official annual fund of the University of Central Arkansas Department of Athletics and is a top fund-raising priority. The Purple Circle Fund provides essential operating resources and is critical to the continued success of UCA Athletics in supporting all sports. The Purple Circle fund focuses on three key areas to positively impact the lives of our 450+ UCA student-athletes. These areas of focus are: Academic Support; Student-Athlete Success Initiatives; Facility Enhancements.

Our membership once again responded in 2022-23 with Purple Circle contributions totaling more than \$500,000. This year on UCA's Day of Giving, donors contributed \$257,952 to the Purple Circle Fund, continuing the exciting trend of the previous years.

● CORPORATE SPONSORSHIPS

The arrangement with Peak Sports MGMT/UCA Sports Properties has proven to be extremely beneficial for UCA Athletics and corporate partners alike, as our property has grown from \$300,000 per year to over \$1,000,000, and the Central Arkansas brand continues to enhance its image and visibility. During this time, local and regional businesses have realized an increase in value in their relationship with Central Arkansas Athletics.

● BUDGET

UCA & UCA Athletics are committed to reducing the amount of state funding for Athletics while increasing the amount of external funding from ticket sales, fundraising, corporate sponsorships, and NCAA Revenue. This trend is demonstrated below.

REVENUE	FY23	FY22	FY21	FY20*	FY19	FY18
Student Fees	\$5,300,000 36%	\$5,093,498 35%	\$5,028,798 38%	\$5,276,664 41%	\$5,215,840 38%	\$5,249,391 39%
Auxiliaries	\$4,000,000 27%	\$4,627,723 32%	\$3,776,049 28%	\$2,770,932 21%	\$3,698,946 27%	\$3,611,406 27%
E&G	\$1,750,000 12%	\$1,410,887 10%	\$1,391,407 10%	\$1,362,789 11%	\$1,333,453 10%	\$1,304,748 10%
External Funds	\$3,400,000 23%	\$3,410,392 23%	\$2,999,990 23%	\$3,395,029 26%	\$3,258,809 24%	\$3,216,003 24%
Federal	\$100,000 1%	\$73,807 1%	\$73,495 1%	\$150,205 1%	\$130,672 1%	\$120,963 1%
TOTAL	\$14,550,000 100%	\$14,616,307 100%	\$13,269,739 ... 100%	\$12,955,619 100%	\$13,637,720 ... 100%	\$13,502,511 ... 100%
EXPENSES						
Salaries & Fringes	\$4,218,219 29%	\$4,135,509 28%	\$4,096,343 ... 31%	\$4,236,859 33%	\$4,140,814 ... 30%	\$4,087,035 ... 30%
Scholarships	\$5,184,854 36%	\$5,083,190 35%	\$4,628,112 ... 35%	\$4,290,018 33%	\$4,554,909 33%	\$4,484,781 ... 33%
Travel	\$1,750,000 12%	\$1,751,994 12%	\$1,213,611 ... 9%	\$1,418,134 11%	\$2,032,145 ... 15%	\$1,894,897 ... 14%
M&O	\$1,500,000 10%	\$1,459,320 10%	\$1,257,973 ... 9%	\$1,362,577 11%	\$1,182,049 ... 9%	\$1,276,509 ... 9%
Debt Service	\$670,412 5%	\$670,412 5%	\$671,057 5%	\$669,102 5%	\$672,746 5%	\$671,793 5%
Medical	\$225,000 2%	\$517,297 4%	\$471,137 4%	\$153,697 1%	\$152,211 1%	\$145,612 1%
Federal	\$100,000 1%	\$73,807 1%	\$73,495 1%	\$150,205 1%	\$130,672 1%	\$120,963 1%
Facilities	\$575,000 4%	\$583,316 4%	\$440,802 3%	\$450,110 3%	\$474,377 3%	\$495,496 4%
Other	\$326,515 2%	\$341,462 2%	\$417,209 3%	\$224,917 2%	\$297,797 2%	\$325,425 2%
TOTAL	\$14,550,000 100%	\$14,616,307 100%	\$13,269,739 ... 100%	\$12,955,619 100%	\$13,637,720 ... 100%	\$13,502,511 .. 100%

SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS



The University of Central Arkansas Bears and Sugar Bears had another successful year in their second time through the ASUN Conference. UCA student-athletes won both individual and team championships during the 2022-23 school year and continued to excel in the classroom and the community as well.

SOFTBALL:

- The UCA Softball Bears dominated the ASUN regular season in 2023, finishing with a 22-2 league record and their first regular-season championship, then won the ASUN Tournament as well.

- The Bears were ranked in all five major national polls for the first time in school history.

- UCA swept a pair of games from Top 10 power and in-state rival Arkansas, winning in Fayetteville and Conway. The Fayetteville win was the first for the Bears over the Razorbacks.

The rematch with Arkansas at Farris Field in Conway drew a stadium-record crowd of 2,475.

- Jordan Johnson was the ASUN Pitcher of the Year and Madi Young was the ASUN Defensive Player of the Year.

- UCA advanced to the NCAA Regionals in Tuscaloosa, Ala., for the second time in school history.

FOOTBALL:

- The Football Bears won a share of the first ASUN championship in the fall with a 3-2 conference mark.

- Sophomore All-American defensive David Walker

was one of three finalists for the prestigious Buck Buchanan Award, which recognizes the national defensive player of the year at the NCAA Division I FCS level.

- Walker was named to six All-America teams, while Jarrod Barnes, Jaylin Hendrix and TaMuarion also earned All-America honors.

- Walker was named the ASUN Defensive Player of the Year and Will Diggins was the ASUN Freshman of the Year.

- Graduate placekicker Hayden Ray was named the ASUN Football Scholar-Athlete of the Year

VOLLEYBALL:

- The Volleyball Sugar Bears drew the fifth seed out of 14 teams for the 2022 ASUN Championship.

- Setter Caylan Koons was named to the ASUN All-Freshman Team.

- Koons was a three-time ASUN Freshman of the Week and a one-time Setter of the Week.

- Junior Lexie Gregory was named to the CSC Academic All-District team

WOMEN'S SOCCER:

- The Bears reached the semifinals of the 2022 ASUN Championship as the sixth seed.

- UCA upset defending champion Lipscomb on penalty kicks in the quarterfinal round.

SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS



- UCA head coach Jeremy Bishop reached the 100-win mark with a win over Little Rock on Aug. 28. He is the winningest coach in school history.

MEN'S SOCCER:

- The Bears reached the championship game of the 2022 ASUN Championship before losing to the No. 1 seed.
- Five Bears were named to the All-ASUN team, including first-team selections Karim Diao and Sebastian Andreassen.
- Andreassen and Bradyn Knutson were named to the ASUN All-Academic team.
- Andreassen and Richy Lapointe-Guevara was named to the United Soccer Coaches All-Region team.

CROSS COUNTRY:

- Twins Julian Haessner and Philipp Haessner both earned All-ASUN honors at the 2022 ASUN Championship. Julian finished 7th overall, breaking the school record.
- UCA's men's team finished sixth and the women's team placed 10th overall.
- Sara Steimel was the ASUN Runner of the Week and Sequoya Prentice was the Freshman of the Week on Sept. 14.

MEN'S BASKETBALL:

- Sophomore guard Camren Hunter was named to the All-ASUN team.

- Hunter was named the ASUN Player of the Week on Dec. 12.

- The Bears went 4-1 against in-state opponents, beating Little Rock, Hendrix, Champion Christian and Arkansas State.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL:

- Sandra rushing resigned after leading the Sugar Bears to 184 victories since she took over in 2012-13.
- Parris Atkins was a two-time ASUN Freshman of the Week selection.
- Kierra Prim was a two-time ASUN Newcomer of the Week selection.
- Tony Kemper was hired in March as the new head women's basketball coach.

WOMEN'S TENNIS:

- The Bears reached the quarterfinals of the 2023 ASUN Championship before losing to top seed and eventual champion North Florida.
- UCA finished with a 7-3 record at home this season.

MEN'S GOLF:

- Freshman Luke Sienkiewicz was named to the ASUN All-Freshman team, the first since joining the ASUN in 2021-22.
- Sienkiewicz was named the ASUN Men's Golfer of the Week on March 23.



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SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS



- It was the debut season for head coach Austin Eoff, a Benton, Ark. native who came to UCA from Purdue.

WOMEN'S GOLF:

- UCA finished third in the 2023 ASUN Championship in Huntsville, Ala.
- Madison Holmes had a Top 10 finish at the ASUN Championship, finishing ninth overall.
- Graduate student Elin Kumlin was named to the ASUN All-Academic Team.
- UCA won the Arkansas State Lady Red Wolves Classic in October in Jonesboro.

TRACK AND FIELD:

- The men's and women's program were under the director of head coach Josie Weaver for the first time.
- Hunter Henderson was named to the ASUN All-Academic Team.
- UCA's men's team finished 5th at the ASUN Indoors, with Armonte Paulk earned a gold medal in

the 400 meters.

- UCA's women's team finished sixth at the ASUN Indoor behind a gold-medal performance from Kendelle McCoy in the 60 meters.

- The UCA men finished fifth and the women sixth at the ASUN Outdoor. UCA won gold medals in the men's 4x100 relay and the women's 4x100 relay.

BEACH VOLLEYBALL:

- UCA recorded eight victories, including wins over Southern Miss, New Orleans, Southeastern Louisiana and Stephen F. Austin.

BASEBALL:

- The Bears knocked off perennial power and ninth-ranked Vanderbilt in March in Nashville.
- The Bears had three ASUN Pitchers of the Week, including Payton Windham and Jesse Barker twice.
- Former UCA pitcher Gavin Stone (2018-20) made his Major League Baseball debut with the Los Angeles Dodgers on May 3, 2023.

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STUDENT-ATHLETE ADVISORY COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

- *Stoby's Pancake Breakfast benefiting Samaritan's Feet*
- *Student-Athletes participated in Toys for Tots, Operation Christmas Child and Angel Bear around the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.*

LIFE SKILLS AREAS RECOMMENDED BY NCAA

- *Alcohol and drug guidelines*
- *Personal development*
- *Leadership*
- *Sexual orientation*
- *Diversity*
- *Nutrition*
- *Personal counseling*
- *Gambling*
- *Career counseling*

AREAS COVERED THIS YEAR

- *Athlete2Career*
- *Sexual misconduct/Title IX training*
- *Leadership Panel featuring former UCA male and female student-athletes*
- *Gambling Education for student-athletes and athletic staff*

● COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS

Throughout the year, our teams volunteer at numerous community events, school programs, youth & elderly programs and charity functions, in addition to on-campus events and organizing and volunteering for fundraisers for a variety of charities. In all, our student-athletes logged more than 500 hours of community service over the past year even during the pandemic. Some of the projects UCA student-athletes & staff were involved in over the past year include:

- *Conway Optimist Club Youth Football Clinic*
- *Numerous reading programs at local elementary schools*
- *5K Walk for Diabetes*
- *Collecting toys for annual Toys for Tots*
- *Packing boxes at Operation Christmas Child warehouse*
- *Volunteering at Boys & Girls Club of Conway*
- *Assisting with Tacos4Life Mobile Pack program to provide food to underdeveloped nations*
- *Staffing "The Big Event" volunteer day in Conway*
- *Worked UCA "Brake For Bears" safe driving/pedestrian awareness event*
- *Participating in morning Meet & Greets at local elementary schools.*
- *Volunteering at Community Connections' "Field of Dreams."*