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### **Hofstra U. Is 2nd University in 2 Weeks to Drop Its Football Team**

*By Libby Sander*

Hofstra University has eliminated its football program and will redirect the team's \$4.5-million budget toward new academic ventures and need-based scholarships, the university's president said today, echoing a similar announcement last week at Northeastern University.

The Hofstra team suffered from low attendance and flagging interest among students and the local community, and financial support was dwindling, the president, Stuart Rabinowitz, said in a [letter](#) to the university. He called the decision a "strategically driven reallocation of resources."

"The football program, the largest of the athletic programs, is by far the most expensive," Mr. Rabinowitz wrote. "In the end, we could not continue to justify the expense of football compared to the benefits it brought to the university."

Hofstra's Board of Trustees recently completed a two-year review of the football program, which competes in the NCAA's Division I-AA in the Colonial Athletic Association. The board voted unanimously last night to discontinue the program and put the \$4.5-million into academics and scholarships.

There are no plans to cut any more of the college's 17 sports, Mr. Rabinowitz wrote, and the 84 athletes on the football team will keep their scholarships, if they choose to stay at Hofstra.

The program has struggled in recent years. This past season, the average student attendance at football games was 500, while general attendance averaged 4,000. The team sold 172 season tickets, far less than the men's basketball team, which has sold 750 season tickets. The athletic department has an overall budget of \$22.5-million, with \$2.8-million of that going to football scholarships. Officials said private donations from boosters had been insufficient to pay for the entire program.

The university is not the first to spike its football program. Last week Northeastern University, another member of the Colonial

Athletic Association, [dropped its football team](#). Like Hofstra, officials there said the cut was not a response to the recession, but an unwillingness to spend the millions of dollars needed to revive a program that had produced six consecutive losing seasons.

Mr. Rabinowitz said the decision to cut Hofstra's football program, which began in 1937 and had been competing in Division I-AA since 1991, was key to the college's long-term health.

"This was not an easy call," he said, "but for the future of the university, we believe it was the right one."

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