

**GENDER EQUITY IN INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS  
A REPORT TO THE BOARD OF REGENTS  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
OCTOBER 1992**

**BACKGROUND**

On April 10, 1992, the Board of Regents adopted the following resolution:

Resolved: that the administration and the athletic directors formulate goals and objectives for addressing the issue of gender equity, establish a timetable for implementation of those goals and objectives, and report back to the Board of Regents within six months.

This report is submitted in response to the Regents' action. It is based upon the preliminary review and recommendations of an advisory committee that included the Directors of Men's and Women's Athletics, the Big Ten Faculty Representatives, and the Chair of the Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics.<sup>1</sup> It further reflects administrative assessments of related fiscal needs and constraints. Periodic updates will be required and will be provided to the Board through annual reports of the Athletic Directors.

**GENDER EQUITY CONTEXT**

The "issue of gender equity" in intercollegiate athletics raises two fundamental questions: 1) How should gender equity be defined?; and 2) How should related initiatives be funded? Both questions require national, conference, and institutional responses that, to date, have resisted easy answers.

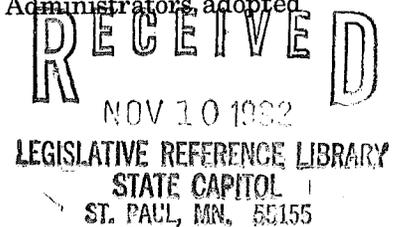
As recently stated by the Chair of the NCAA Committee on Women's Athletics, "There is not a commonly accepted idea of what gender equity is." Instead, the concept is interpreted differently within and across athletic departments, conferences, and organizations as well as among university administrators, faculties, and constituencies. To some, gender equity consists of selected comparisons of similar activities; to others, it constitutes the legal imperatives of Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments; and to still others, it includes broader philosophical and moral considerations.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Appreciation is extended to the members and staff of the Advisory Committee: McKinley Boston, Director of Men's Athletics; Chris Voelz, Director of Women's Athletics; Robert Stein, Dean of the Law School; Jo-Ida Hansen, Professor of Psychology; Theodore Labuza, Professor of Food Sciences and Nutrition; Jeffrey Schemmel, Athletic Compliance Officer; and Vickie Courtney, University Senate Staff.

<sup>2</sup>In September 1992, the National Association of Women's Athletic Administrators adopted the following definition:

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Not unsurprisingly, the lack of a standard definition gives rise to differences over the funding of gender equity. At present, most Division I men's programs are expected to be self-supporting, relying upon so-called "revenue" sports (i.e., Gopher football, basketball, and hockey) to finance overall departmental activities. Likewise, most Division I women's programs (although not the University of Minnesota due to the Women's State Special) are funded largely through revenues generated by men's athletic events.

As a result, there are inevitable tensions among "revenue" and "non-revenue" sports, men's and women's programs, and conferences and institutions regarding the sharing of athletically-generated resources. Those tensions are exacerbated in an environment of escalating costs and constrained revenues, of unmet needs and increasing Title IX litigation. It is within such an environment that the issues of gender equity must be addressed.

### **BIG TEN CONFERENCE GENDER EQUITY GOAL**

The absence of a national agreement on gender equity has prompted individual universities to operationalize the term and, in the case of the Big Ten Conference, to formulate a conference consensus. Thus, in 1991, the Big Ten adopted a guiding principle that stated, "All member universities shall assure the fair distribution of resources, access to facilities and treatment of student-athletes and personnel. The Big Ten Conference acknowledges a responsibility to assert the value of achieving equal participation by men and women in intercollegiate sports."

One year later, the Big Ten Council of Presidents adopted a conference-wide gender equity goal. That goal is to achieve, by June 1997, a level of athletics' participation that is 60 percent male and 40 percent female. By June 1993, each member school must submit to the conference an institutional plan for meeting the target. Thereafter, annual progress reports will be required.

### **GENDER EQUITY PRINCIPLES**

The action by the Big Ten is one that the University of Minnesota endorses and that will guide its gender equity initiatives for the next five years. Consistent therewith, the University has developed a set of related gender equity principles that provide a framework for implementing specific actions. Those principles, while subject to changing conditions and finances, include the following:

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Gender equity is an atmosphere and reality where fair distribution of overall athletic opportunities and resources proportionate to enrollment are available to women and men and where no student athlete, coach, or athletic administrator is discriminated against in any way in the athletic program on the basis of gender. That is to say, an athletics program is gender equitable when the men's sports program would be pleased to accept as its own the overall participation opportunities and resources currently allocated to the women's sports program and vice versa.

1. The University is committed to the principle of gender equity in intercollegiate athletics and to the 60:40 male/female participation goal adopted by the Big Ten Council of Presidents.
2. The meaning of "gender equity" resists a single definition, but at a minimum, includes the notion that women should be afforded opportunities, experiences, and support that are similar to those of men in pursuing athletic interests.
3. The pursuit of gender equity should be carried out consistent with the Mission Statement and Statement of Principles for Intercollegiate Athletics of the University of Minnesota.
4. The advancement of equitable opportunities for women should not be at the expense of decreasing the number of men's sports.
5. The pursuit of gender equity should not be at the expense of eroding the overall competitiveness of either the men's or the women's athletics programs.
6. The pursuit of gender equity should be consistent with the University's obligations as a member of the Big Ten Conference.
7. The development of a gender equity plan should include consideration of conference and national efforts to provide gender equity.
8. The development of strategies to fund gender equity should include consideration of the fiscal environment of the state, University, and athletics' programs as well as all cost containment and revenue enhancement possibilities.
9. The revenue enhancement strategies should concentrate upon ways of increasing private fundraising, overall support for the women's program, and income from the men's football, basketball, and hockey programs.
10. The funding of gender equity should not be at the expense of the University's academic programs.

#### **GENDER EQUITY STRATEGIES**

As previously indicated, under the Council of Presidents' resolution each member institution has the responsibility to determine strategies for achieving the 60:40 goal. With current Big Ten participation rates ranging from approximately 66:34 to 74:26, the requisite progress and strategies will vary from campus to campus. Theoretically, however, three broad options are available.

### Strategy I

The first option is to increase the number of female athletes and hold the number of male athletes at the current level. At the University of Minnesota, this strategy would require the addition of 85 female participants.

	Men		Women	
1992 Current	373	(69%)	164	(31%)
	<u>+0</u>		<u>+85</u>	
1997 Target	373	(60%)	249	(40%)

This option would further entail the sponsorship of at least two new Gopher women's sports and additional annual resources of more than a million dollars.

### Strategy II

A second option is to reduce the number of male athletes and hold the number of female athletes at the current level. At the University of Minnesota, this option would require the reduction of 109 male participants.

	Men		Women	
1992 Current	373	(69%)	164	(31%)
	<u>-109</u>		<u>-0</u>	
1997 Target	264	(60%)	164	(40%)

This option would likely result in elimination of at least three non-revenue men's sports and expenditure reductions of several hundred thousand dollars.

### Strategy III

A third alternative would be to both increase the number of female athletes and reduce the number of male athletes. Under a Big Ten proposal (outlined below), the University of Minnesota could meet its 60:40 goal through the addition of 43 female participants and the reduction of 63 male participants.

	Men		Women	
1992 Current	373	(69%)	164	(31%)
	<u>-63</u>		<u>+43</u>	
1997 Target	310	(60%)	207	(40%)

This option would increase the number of sports and participation opportunities for women. It would not require the elimination of any men's sports but would foreclose "walk-on opportunities" for some Gopher male athletes. There would also be marginal, but undetermined, cost savings.

It is the present intention of the Administration and the Athletic Directors to pursue Strategy III. The strategy would be implemented over the next five years through the following actions:

Addition of Women's Soccer

The women's program will sponsor a varsity level soccer team. Funding has been provided to hire a coach in 1992-93 and competition could begin as early as 1993-94. The program will serve between 25 and 30 participants and when fully implemented will require an annual budget of at least \$400,000.

Expansion of Participants in Current Women's Sports

An expansion of team rosters in existing women's sports might accommodate between 13 and 18 additional participants. The expansion would be phased in and could begin as early as 1993-94. It would entail some marginal per participant costs.

Squad Size Caps for Men's Sports

A reduction in the number of men's participants would be achieved by placing "caps" on the size of existing sports. Because a unilateral imposition would be competitively disadvantageous, the Big Ten will propose national legislation limiting the size of men's squads. Should such limits not be adopted by the NCAA, then the Big Ten or its individual members will have to determine whether to impose them on a conference or institutional level.

Men's Sport	UM Current participants	Proposed legislation	UM financial aid participants	Big Ten average	NCAA average
Baseball	35	33	13	40.4	37.1
Basketball	16	14	14	16.1	15.4
Cross Country/Track	43	40	14	79.3	60.4
Football	120	105	73	122.5	117.0
Golf	19	12	4.3	17.8	13.7
Gymnastics	13	14	7	17.6	15.9
Hockey	43	26	19.9	30.4	29.1
Swimming/Diving	42	26	10.6	29.4	28.8
Tennis	12	10	5	11.5	11.6
Wrestling	30	28	10.6	36.1	31.3
Total	373	308	171.4	401.1	360.3

## Consideration of Other Women's Sports

Alternatively, should the above actions prove insufficient to meet conference and institutional commitments, consideration will be given to the addition of other women's sports. Any decision will require further assessment of interests, costs, funding, competition availabilities, and related progress. A determination would be made by 1995-96.

### GENDER EQUITY FUNDING

The above initiatives as well as continuing Title IX obligations will require an expanded fiscal commitment. Traditionally, that commitment has been reflected in the University's State Special for Women's Athletics which today provides \$2.7 million of the department's \$4.4 million budget. More recently, it has included additional efforts to identify the longer range (i.e., five year) needs of the women's program and to address them on an annual basis consistent with evolving resources and changes. Over the past two years, these efforts have involved a reallocation of central funds, NCAA revenues, and media income as well as the following measures:

	1992-93	1991-92
WICA Budget Increases	12.7 percent	12 percent
Central Allocations	\$675,000	\$424,000
NCAA Revenues	\$265,000	\$265,000
Radio/TV Revenues	\$353,000	N/A
Legislative Cut Exemption	N/A	\$ 53,000
Peik Hall Renovation	N/A	\$ 35,000
Restoration of State Special		
Women's Sports Pavilion Renovation		
Sponsorship of NCAA Legislation for Women's Programs		
Hosting of NCAA Women's Championships		
1992 Gymnastics		
1993 Swimming and Diving		
1995 Basketball		

Together, the state, institutional, and departmental efforts have placed the University of Minnesota's women's program among the national leaders in overall support. At the same time, the continued pursuit of gender equity and Title IX initiatives will take place in a more austere fiscal climate. Already, some universities have been forced to drop certain sports, others have eliminated entire programs, and still others have imposed cost containment measures.

Last June, for example, the Big Ten Council of Presidents charged the Directors of Athletics to maintain level expenditures (excepting grant-in-aids and debt reduction) in 1992-93 based on actual 1991-92 expenditures. The Presidents further imposed restrictions on the mode of team travel, the number of committees and meetings, the size of the football travel squad,

and the number of participants in the Rose Bowl and NCAA Convention delegations. Finally, the Council directed that proposals be presented by June 1993, for reducing the size of men's teams, restricting out-of-season training table meals, and eliminating special off-campus housing for home teams on the night before home games.

Such measures will most directly affect the men's program with a decrease in expenditures or rate of growth. To that extent, the differential spending between the men's and women's departments will be further reduced. Those steps alone, however, are unlikely to meet the University's gender equity and Title IX obligations. Instead, there are two ultimate choices: 1) reduce the breadth and expenditures of the men's program; or 2) identify and secure additional resources for the women's program. Both options would be difficult to implement, and as reviewed by the Advisory Committee would require consideration of the following possibilities:

**Reduction in Expenditures:**

1. Squad Caps on Men's Programs

As indicated previously, the imposition of restrictions on the size of men's teams will allow the University to meet the 60:40 conference goal. The reduction, however, would not generate significant fiscal savings as the majority of those affected would be "walk-ons" who represent marginal costs.

2. Tuition Waivers for Scholarship Athletes

Scholarships for tuition and fees represent one of the largest expenditures for athletic programs. In 1992-93, the budgeted costs are \$1.7M in the Gopher men's program and \$945,000 in the women's program. A policy of tuition/fee waivers would reduce the costs to the athletic departments. At the same time, the costs would have to be absorbed by the institution. A survey by the Advisory Committee of forty-two universities indicated that six provided such waivers and in very limited amounts.

3. Elimination of Selected Men's Sports

Under the University's gender equity principles, the elimination of men's non-revenue sports would be a last resort to meeting gender equity obligations. The measure would transfer, not reduce costs, and would be divisive in terms of interdepartmental cooperation, morale, and constituency support.

**Increase in Revenues:**

1. Increased Ticket Revenue

The largest source of income for Gopher athletics is the sale of men's football, basketball, and hockey tickets. The potential for increased revenues over the next five years varies in each of the sports.

Additional revenues in basketball are unlikely given the renovation and reduction of seating in Williams Arena and the costs of the project. On the other hand, the hockey program will have expanded seating capacity in its new ice arena, but any new income is targeted for construction of the new facility. The best potential for additional ticket sales and revenues is offered by the football program. Efforts to realize such potential are and will remain a primary emphasis.

2. Private Fundraising

Historically, the University of Minnesota has been a Big Ten leader in overall private fundraising, but among the lowest in gifts to intercollegiate athletics. The past year, however, evidenced a significant increase in athletic contributions to the men's and the women's programs with the initiation of the Athletics Facilities Project. While a similar drive for support of gender equity initiatives is feasible, such would likely have to await completion of the current facilities' campaign.

3. Legislative State Special

Clearly, there is a state obligation to assist in the funding of gender equity initiatives. Far less clear is whether that responsibility might be more fully actualized under current economic conditions. Any request for additional gender equity funds will have to be considered within the overall priorities of the University's legislative request and as determined by the Regents

4. Student Fee Surcharge

In a survey conducted by the Advisory Committee, approximately half of forty-two Division I universities currently impose a student fee that supports intercollegiate athletics. Consideration of a similar fee for gender equity initiatives at the University of Minnesota would require consultation with the student body, identification of related services (i.e., elimination/reduction in ticket costs), and examination within the context of the overall student fee structure.

### CONCLUSION

The University of Minnesota is committed to meeting its gender equity and Title IX responsibilities. Over the next five years, that commitment will be pursued consistent with its gender equity principles on a national, conference, and institutional level. In addition to meeting Title IX obligations, the University's goal will be to attain, by June 1997 or sooner, the 60:40 participation standard set by the Big Ten Conference.

In terms of participation, the pursuit will require an increase in the proportion of female athletes, a decrease in the number of male athletes, and a monitoring of undergraduate enrollments, athletic interests, and

programmatic opportunities. In terms of funding, the pursuit will dictate the expansion of self-supporting efforts, the containment of programmatic costs, and the identification of resources to address any discriminatory differences.

Finally, periodic reviews of the University's gender equity plans and principles will be undertaken to ensure continued progress and to reflect changing conditions. Those adjustments will be shared with the Regents in the annual reports of the Athletic Directors and in the monthly reports of the President.

The following new section was adopted 6/8/92, effective 7/1/92:

#### **RULE D. GENDER EQUITY ACTION POLICY**

##### **Policy**

The Big Ten Conference believes that a Conference Gender Equity Action Policy is required to address the historical imbalance in the level of male and female student-athlete participation in intercollegiate athletics. In that regard, The Conference members commit to a 60%/40% male female participation level by June 30, 1997. This Gender Equity Action Policy, approved by the Council of Presidents/Chancellors, is designed to implement this commitment through the member institutions by encouraging initiative, creativity, and leadership in the pursuit of the specified participation levels.

##### **Progress Review**

The specific programs and procedures designed to achieve the levels are to be determined by each of the member institutions which will develop and submit a written plan setting forth the actions to be undertaken pursuant to the Policy. Such plan shall be submitted to the Council of Presidents/Chancellors no later than June 30, 1993. Any amendments to this plan will be submitted to the Council of Presidents/Chancellors promptly.

Beginning in June, 1994, each member institution will present an annual report to the Council of Presidents/Chancellors. The report will include a description of the actions taken by the member institution during the course of the preceding academic year in connection with this Policy and a report on the specific level of male-female student-athlete participation as of the date of the report.

##### **Participation Levels**

Each institution is to attain a male-female participation level of 60%/40% prior to the end of the five-year period ending on June 30, 1997 through the implementation of positively directed, good faith efforts to promote female student-athletics. The Conference recognizes that the current levels of male-female student-athlete participation and the overall athletic programs differ at each of the member institutions. However, the Conference believes that the specified levels are attainable for all member institutions. The focus of the Gender Equity Action Policy is on the reasonable, good faith efforts adopted and implemented by the member institutions which are designed to set in motion the systems, programs, and procedures that will be effective in correcting the traditional imbalance in female athletics participation.

##### **Procedures for Implementation**

As indicated above, this Policy seeks to encourage the initiative, creativity, and flexibility of its member institutions in striving to achieve the specified levels. Without limiting in any way other actions that may be taken to comply with this Policy, the following actions may be appropriate:

##### **Rules of Organization and Procedure, Rule D**

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- Increased funding of female student-athlete programs (including, specifically, increased female student-athlete scholarships);
- Increased availability of programs to women;
- Encouragement of increased participation by women;
- Increased dissemination of information to female student-athletes (either attending the member institution or in the high schools) concerning programs available to women;
- Enhancement of public perception of female student-athlete programs;
- Reallocation of resources within the intercollegiate athletics program;
- Cap on squad sizes of men's sports.

##### **Assuring Compliance with the Policy**

The Conference and the Council of Presidents/Chancellors are committed to this Policy. Any member institution that refuses to implement good faith measures under this Policy or fails to make progress in the pursuit of those measures shall be subject to such sanctions as the Council of Presidents/Chancellors determine from time to time to be appropriate.