

Journal of Issues in ***Intercollegiate Athletics***

Canadian Athletic Directors' Perceptions of the Potential for U.S. Title IX Gender Equity Policy

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Canadian university athletic directors' perceptions of the benefits and barriers in attempting to establish gender equity were examined to determine the potential of U.S. Title IX athletic gender equity policy in Canadian institutions of higher education. A 26-item survey was completed by 37 of the 50 athletic directors in Canadian Interuniversity Sport. Findings indicated Canadian administrators generally agreed with American athletic equity policy in both its areas of application and means of compliance. However, athletic directors, particularly more experienced ones, reported some opposition towards the concept of 'proportionality.' It was concluded that the Canadian governing body should move forward by analyzing a wider range of the literature borne out of Title IX's evolution in its 36-year history.

Canadian Interuniversity Sport (CIS) is a national body that governs intercollegiate athletics. Under its auspices over 10,000 student-athletes across Canada compete yearly in 11 sport disciplines with a schedule of close to 3,000 events. The organization claims, "No other sport organization in the country can match the breadth and scope of such a program" (Canadian Interuniversity Sport, 2007). Because CIS provides a national stage for sport participation, the perception of fairness is essential in the eyes of both participants and observers. Furthermore, as an extension of Canadian academia, it is important the organization embody the philosophies espoused by higher education. Danylchuk and Chellardurai (1999) noted intercollegiate athletics organizations "are embedded into a larger system of universities; thus, the major educational ideals of a university serve to set the parameters within which intercollegiate athletic

departments must operate” (p. 149). For these reasons, the development and implementation of an athletic gender equity policy is vital. Only recently has this issue of establishing any potential formal policy come to the forefront in Canadian university athletics.

While the development, implementation, and administration of a formal gender equity policy directed towards female athletes has been in place at American colleges and universities for over 30 years (U.S. Department of Education, 2003), it is a relatively recent concern in Canadian academic institutions. When the CIS initial efforts to craft a policy aimed at establishing athletic scholarship equity for female athletes proved ineffective, this illustrated the importance of analyzing the framework and present state of such policy in American higher education. In fact, the CIS demonstrated some air of openness to adopting or adapting U.S. Title IX directives. Kondro (2002) interviewed CIS chief executive officer Marg McGregor and reported her comments as follows:

Imposing a Title IX requirement on universities wouldn't be that onerous because many already have gender equity policies, Canadian Interuniversity Sport chief executive officer Marg McGregor said. Those internal policies have often given women the 'leverage' to force change on campuses. The largest impact would likely be felt on overall athletic budgets, which don't now require equal funding for men's and women's programs, McGregor said. Depending on the provisions imposed, [McGregor stated] "it would be another instrument which would compel or encourage universities to continue to make progress, if they haven't already reached equity" (p.2).

This outlook was both troubling and encouraging. McGregor's comment was disconcerting because it implied Title IX legislation was simplistic and straightforward. Adopting Title IX in its entirety may be problematic for Canada. McGregor failed to acknowledge the intricate nature of the policy, the difficulties in its implementation, and the continuing debate over its intended and unintended effects. Documented shortcomings related to Title IX include alleged roles in the reduction of men's athletic teams and the support of gender quotas (Brake, 2004; Epstein, 2002; Gavora, 2002; Staurowsky, 2003), but the policy has also been acclaimed for its contributions to providing equity in terms of both participation and program developments in higher education athletics (de Varona & Foudy, 2003; Grossman, 2003). The beneficial outcomes of the policy even prompted mention by the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity (CAAWS) in a brief to the Canadian federal government in 2002. The body encouraged any new legislation put forth in the development of Bill C-54, the Physical Activity and Sport Act, to "have the same impact on women's participation in sport and physical activity as Title IX legislation has had in the United States for the past 30 years" (Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity, 2002, p. 1). This study examined Canadian athletic directors' perceptions regarding the potential of U.S. Title IX athletic policy directives for use in Canadian universities.

Early Concerns

Gender equity concerns have been existent in the CIS for some time. In the decade after the 1978 amalgamation of the Canadian Women's Intercollegiate Athletic Union (CWIAU) with

the forerunner to the CIS, the Canadian Intercollegiate Athletic Union (CIAU), confrontation between men's and women's programs emerged as one major concern facing athletics in Canadian higher education (Moriarty & Holman-Prpich, 1987). During this same period of time, though, a variety of efforts were made by the CIAU to address this concern. Actions to reverse the decline in the representation and status of women in Canadian university sport included (a) accessing federal and provincial government grants to hire female apprentice coaches and administrators, (b) developing student leadership workshops, (c) presenting legislation to correct the imbalance of men representing women's programs at the annual general meetings, (d) printing and distributing Comparative Reports, and, finally, (e) lobbying to keep the issue well represented to members and presidents of the institutions (Inglis, 1988). While these efforts were and are important, the focus of an athletic gender equity policy must rest on the direct outcomes for student athletes, that is, participatory opportunities and the qualities surrounding these opportunities. For this reason, the CIAU/CIS established and continues to operate an Equity and Equality Committee responsible for ensuring long-term opportunities for female student-athletes. However, research on Canadian university athletics since the new millennium still indicated women were at a disadvantage to men when it came to scholarships, team promotion, and operational budgets (Canadian Interuniversity Sport, 2005a & 2005b; Danylchuk & MacLean, 2001; Hoerber, 2007). The need for a formal policy directed towards student athletes appeared necessary.

Initial Policy Efforts

In its June 2001 annual general assembly, the CIS announced an updated policy statement concerning gender equity, and it put forth 12 goals at that time to achieve gender equity (see Appendix A). Though many of these goals related to actions affecting the governing body's infrastructure, the one that directly impacted student-athletes pertained to athletic scholarships. The CIS, in accordance with achieving this end, had announced in 2000 that the amount of financial support given by individual athletic departments would be based on the proportion of male and female student-athletes on their rosters by 2005-2006. In terms of establishing gender equity for athletes, the focus of the policy, financial support in proportion to actual participation, was too narrow in scope. This viewpoint later was confirmed by the CIS during a roundtable meeting in November 2002. The members in attendance concluded "... the current gender equity policy relating to awards was not necessarily the best way to measure or gauge the extent to which university athletic programs are implementing gender equity" (Canadian Interuniversity Sport, 2002, p.2). A number of weaknesses were identified during that gathering. Chief among them were the stated policy did not:

- take into account other athletic related expenditures (coaching, event presentation, traveling opportunities, uniforms, schedules, etc).
- encourage participatory growth in situations where greater athletic opportunities were required for one gender.
- make reference to defined sanctions for failure to comply.

After further reflection, the CIS board of directors met in April 2003 and decided to develop a proposal with an expanded view towards the issue of gender equity. In June of that year the CIS held its annual general meeting and declared:

The provision of gender equitable participation opportunities is considered to be more important and valued in the promotion and encouragement of gender equity than simply the provision of athletic-related awards. A broader look at gender equity, of which athletic-related awards would be a part, would go further to achieving and monitoring gender equity in interuniversity athletics (Canadian Interuniversity Sport, 2003, p. 5).

In an attempt to establish a policy with a broader perspective towards athletic gender equity, the CIS evaluated a number of documents in 2004. These included its own bylaws, a 1999 CIS gender related study of university coaching/administrative positions, and the 1998 *Sport Canada Gender Equity Snap Shot* that focused on Canadian national teams. However, one other document was the *NCAA Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act*, and, unlike the other resources, it outlined a gender equity evaluation tool in American intercollegiate athletics. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) is the CIS counterpart in American higher education and the *NCAA Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act* is a survey originating from the Department of Education's (DOE) Office of Postsecondary Education. The U.S. Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act requires co-educational postsecondary institutions that receive federal student financial assistance, and have an intercollegiate athletic program, to prepare an annual report to the DOE on athletic participation, staffing, and revenues and expenses, by men's and women's teams. The CIS was interested in the survey because it was a tool that examined the degree of institutional athletic gender equity.

Perhaps the most important text detailing the CIS development of an athletic gender equity policy, though, was the *Working Document* put forth at the CIS annual general meeting in 2004. The *Document* summarized the organization's past efforts and proposed four main indicators the body would use as a framework to develop policy directives for athletic gender equity. These were athletic participation, athletic awards, coaching/leadership, and operating expenses. It was decided that the first two indicators, participation and athletic awards, would be the only two used in the first number of years of the policy implementation.

With regard to athletic participation opportunities, two benchmarks or ranges to measure equity were recognized as acceptable approaches by the CIS. Individual institutions could opt to utilize either method in measuring opportunity in its athletic program. The first of these methods had "athletic participation opportunities linked to each member institution's full-time equivalency of the student population" (Canadian Interuniversity Sport, 2004b, p. 42). This approach had the university using a calculation based on both the undergraduate and graduate student body and it maintained the institution should be within a 10% degree of its population. The second method permitted institutions to divide the athletic opportunities into equal halves – a 50-50 split. In other words, if 76 roster spots existed in the various sports offered to males on campus, then 76 spots would have to be available for women's participation also. Once again, the CIS allowed for a 10% degree of difference in the implementation of this benchmark.

The financial benchmark using athletic awards was linked to the participation policy. Institutions would establish their awards based on the number of athletic participants established

in either of the two ways (student body proportion or 50-50 split) the university chose to pursue. Similarly, the awards would be allowed to fall within a 10% range of either of the two benchmarks used in athletic participation opportunities. The CIS recommended a target implementation date of three years from the point of the policy's approval by its members. They also put forth penalties for failure to comply with this benchmark. Two statements were made in the *Working Document*: "If you do not comply you would be limited to giving the equivalent / no more than the other gender" and "In those instances where an institution is not in compliance, a freeze would be imposed on increasing the dollar value of awards being provided to the over-represented gender" (Canadian Interuniversity Sport, 2004, p. 43).

History of Title IX

In Canada, the sports' governing body, the CIS, is responsible for developing a gender equity policy for university athletics. However, such policy in the United States, while implemented by a governing body – the NCAA – actually was developed by the federal government and on June 23, 1972 took the form of a specific Act, Title IX. Title IX of the Education Amendments (1972) stated, "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance..." Orleans (1996) explained Title IX "was modeled after Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ... which prohibits racial discrimination in activities benefiting from federal funds, and was enacted to attack persistent widespread segregation in America's public schools a decade after *Brown v. Board of Education*" (p.133). Passeggi (2002) noted the Act also was "modeled after Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of race and gender" (p.7).

After much debate Congress passed Section 844 of the Education Amendments of 1974, also known as the Javits amendment, stating the Act additionally pertained to intercollegiate athletics. However, it did not result in clear implementation. The problem for many higher education institutions was in *how* the law was to be implemented; compliance proved to be problematic. On July 21, 1975, the United States federal government's Regulation (34 C.F.R. Part 106), governing the application of Title IX to athletic programs, became effective. The Regulation was divided into two main categories: topics that dealt with athletic scholarships and topics that provided guidance regarding athletics in general. With regard to athletic financial assistance (scholarships), Section 106.37(c) stated, "[Institutions] must provide reasonable opportunities for such award (of financial assistance) for members of each sex in proportion to the number of students of each sex participating in intercollegiate athletics." With respect to athletics in general the Regulations stated in part:

A recipient which operates or sponsors interscholastic, intercollegiate, club or intramural athletics shall provide equal athletic opportunity for members of both sexes. In determining whether equal opportunities are available the [Athletic] Director will consider, among other factors:

- Whether the selection of sports and levels of competition effectively accommodate the interests and abilities of members of both sexes (34 C.F.R.; 106.41(c) (1999)).

Despite this Regulation, institutions still found it difficult to understand exactly what they needed to do to comply with Title IX. Passeggi (2002) explained, “the vague wording, broad language, and the relative lack of legislative materials accompanying its passage, made it difficult for universities to understand Title IX’s meaning and scope”

(p. 8). In response to this uncertainty, on December 11, 1979 the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW), which was responsible for administering Title IX through its Office for Civil Rights (OCR), published *A Policy Interpretation: Title IX and Intercollegiate athletics* (44 Fed. Reg. 71413 (1979) OCR Policy Codification Document No. 117). The document outlined and addressed the policy in terms of three distinct aspects of a university’s athletic program: athletic financial assistance; equivalence in other athletic benefits and opportunities; and effective accommodation of student interests and abilities. In addition to these elements of consideration, the *Policy Interpretation* also dealt with the issue of compliance by putting forth the three-part test. According to the test, universities have three options by which to demonstrate they have complied with the law: have the same proportion of women on sports teams as there are female undergraduates; have a history and continuing practice of expanding opportunities for women; or prove that they are fully and effectively accommodating the interests and abilities of women on the campus and among the institution’s potential students.

Since its inception, U.S. Title IX athletic gender equity policy has been challenged and debated in all three branches of the federal government – executive, legislative, and judicial. Nevertheless, no argument has altered the original framework of American policy.

The Present Study

In recent years, the CIS has moved toward establishing formal gender equity policy. In contrast, the U.S. policy has been in place for more than 35 years. Though Title IX has been widely debated and intensely scrutinized over this time, the outcome has been relatively little change to its original form. Given this stature, and bearing in mind what has been learned through discussion of Title IX, it offers a useful foundation from which Canadian gender equity policy may develop.

While previous research (Beaubier, 2004) examined the issues and potential difficulties in adopting or adapting Title IX for Canadian university athletics, notably direct examination was found of perspectives of athletic directors regarding the potential for implementation or adaptation of such policy. Given these individuals will be required to implement gender equity policies, understanding their perspective is vital to development of effective practices. For example, Gray (2004) employed a similar approach measuring changes in athletic gender equity at NCAA Division I-A institutions from 2001 to 2003 through a survey of 34 Senior Women’s Advisors [SWAs]. Seeking to weigh the significance of five main factors believed to contribute to gender equity in university athletics, Gray concluded:

The survey of senior women administrators made it apparent that the attitude of the athletic director is the one dominating factor in an institution’s movement toward gender equity in athletics. One hundred percent of the SWAs participating in the survey selected the attitude of the athletic director as the most key factor in movement toward gender equity. The secondary factors identified by the SWAs were the attitude of other senior administrators on campus and the attitude of the SWA. The two money-oriented factors

the SWAs were asked to evaluate, size of the operating budget and revenue generated, came in fourth and fifth place in significance (p. vii).

Likewise, the role of CIS athletic directors seems crucial for the development, implementation, and enforcement of a gender equity policy. In discussing the nature of managerial work in Canadian intercollegiate athletics, the greatest responsibility for organizational efforts along with policy and decision-making continues to rest with the top position, the athletic director (Danylchuk & Chelladurai, 1999; Hoerber & Frisby, 2001). It also should be noted the athletic directors' sphere of influence regarding such policy extends beyond the realm of their own universities because the CIS board of directors itself is comprised from a selection of these same individuals.

Based on these ideas, this research examined Canadian university athletic directors' perceptions about the benefits and barriers in attempting to establish gender equity in the context of university athletics. Findings from this study may provide insight into the formulation of gender equity policy in Canadian university athletics. The strengths and shortcomings of Title IX intercollegiate athletic policy in the United States present Canadian academic and athletic administrators with opportunities to study what elements may be effective and which may be problematic for their respective institutions. It was of interest to learn what percentage of athletic directors supported the implementation of Title IX policy directives and whether problems existent with Title IX policy at American universities might present the same or similar difficulties for Canadian academic institutions.

Three research questions were established. First, given the far-reaching influence of the current social climate that emphasizes gender equity, would Canadian athletic directors recognize the importance of athletic gender equity in a fashion similar to their American counterparts? If so, it was expected the majority of Canadian athletic directors would support implementation of Title IX policy directives. Second, given the similarities in the tasks required of athletic program administrators in American and Canadian universities, would Canadian athletic directors anticipate difficulties similar to those uncovered in American institutions affected by Title IX? Such documented problems included the difficulties connected with achieving compliance and, specifically, the concept of proportionality. Third, would athletic directors' perspectives be influenced by the years of experience they have had in administering to athletic program issues and finances? Specifically, would athletic directors who had more experience in their positions be less likely to embrace all of the tenets of gender equity policy, since they would be more likely to anticipate potential difficulties with policy implementation.

Method

Participants

All 50 of the athletic directors in the Canadian Interuniversity Sports body were invited to participate in the study. From this group, 37 (74%) of the athletic directors participated.¹ The

¹ Dr. Don Dillman (February 2, 2005, personal communication) stated given that sampling the entire population of potential participants was occurring, "there is no magic number at which validity can be assumed." Dr. Dillman is a

proportions of male and female athletic directors who participated in the study were consistent with those in the population (i.e., 84% men; 16% women). The respondents' experience as athletic directors varied across the range of options such that: 18 (48.6%) had 5 years or less of experience; 8 (21.6%) had 6 to 10 years of experience; 4 (10.8%) had 11 to 15 years of experience; 1 (2.7%) had 16 to 20 years of experience; and 6 (16.2%) had more than 20 years of experience.

In addition, years of experience varied with gender. The most experienced athletic directors were male ($n = 6$). Specifically, 16 (51.6%) of the men had five years or less of experience (vs. 2 or 33.3% of the women); 6 (16.9%) of the men had between 6 and 10 years of experience (vs. 2 or 33.3% of the women); 2 (6.4%) of the men had between 11 and 15 years of experience (vs. 2 or 33.3% of the women); 1 (3.2%) of the men had 16 to 20 years of experience (vs. 0 of the women); and 6 (16.1%) of the men had more than 20 years of experience (vs. 0 of the women).

The participants represented the range of universities across the country. This fact was illustrated in the size of the universities represented (minimum of 3,000 to greater than 24,000 undergraduate students), the total number of CIS athletes for whom they were responsible (between 30 and 432; mean = 211), and the percentage of female athletes in the athletic programs (range of 28% to 72%; mean = 48%).

The Research Instrument

A 26-item survey was created based on the key elements of Title IX policy (see Appendix B). It allowed participants to provide nominal, ordinal, and interval data. The nominal item asked for the respondent's gender while the ordinal items requested information regarding the athletic director's years of experience at the postsecondary level; the number of teams/female teams on campus; the total number of athletes/female athletes on campus; and the approximate number of full-time undergraduate students on a campus. The 18 interval items were divided into two areas of research interest. The first concerned respondents' opinions about the conceptual framework of Title IX athletic gender equity policy. These represented directives that addressed the three distinct elements of an American university's athletic program: athletic financial assistance, equivalence in other athletic benefits and opportunities; and effective accommodation of student interests and abilities. The latter area of interest sought subjects' views pertaining to the means by which policy compliance is determined. These items were derived from the three-part test of the U.S. 1979 Policy Interpretation.

For each interval item, participants used a six-point Likert scale to rate the degree to which they agreed (no opinion, strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat agree, strongly agree) with a statement. The inclusion of "neither agree nor disagree" and "no opinion" in the answer choices was done deliberately so as to discriminate between respondent's knowledge/comprehension of a specific item. Instances where an athletic director had conflicting concerns surrounding the impact of an item such as, "Athletic departments should pursue gender equity so that the male/female ratio of athletes is proportional to the

professor of sociology at Washington State University, senior scientist for the Gallup Organization, and previously served as Senior Survey Methodologist at the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

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male/female ratio of the undergraduate student enrolment,” could be addressed by the “neither agree nor disagree” option. However, where an athletic director could not conceive what impact such a policy directive might have, s/he had the option of responding with “no opinion.”

Finally, an open-ended question at the end of the survey asked respondents to briefly outline or identify specific proposed or implemented policy initiatives regarding athletic gender equity at their institution. This was done to ascertain the athletic director’s current awareness and/or understanding of CIS gender equity policy development. Secondly, it enabled researchers to determine whether institutions had already acted independently of the CIS and developed any policy framework similar to Title IX.

Face and content validity were both utilized for the survey instrument. Face validity was established by having individuals examine the instrument to determine whether it clearly measured a construct. Using a checklist asking them to comment on such issues as length, cultural barriers, typographical errors, and appropriate language, six Canadian academics with expertise in the areas of gender equity, survey methods, or athletic management assessed the survey. Content validity was utilized to make certain the survey accurately reflected Title IX athletic policy statements. It was resolved that athletic directors and legal academics at NCAA division I institutions would serve as the best experts due to their familiarity with Title IX in higher education. The examination of the survey items was conducted by 12 individuals. These experienced individuals included an athletic director who had been co-chair of the Title IX *Commission on Opportunity in Athletics* and a law professor who sat on the NCAA Division I Management Council, the chief administrative and legislative body. The various persons made some suggestions for minor changes; however, each one agreed the instrument had both face and content validity.

Procedures

All participants were contacted first by telephone to describe the research and to confirm the correct mailing addresses. Each participant then was assigned a number for confidentiality purposes and forwarded a cover letter and questionnaire package by mail. Francophone athletic directors received a cover letter translated into French but the enclosed questionnaire was in English. They were informed of this detail during the initial telephone contact and these participants concluded the second language factor would not be a personal problem. This procedure was conducted out of respect for such participants. While their schools participate in a national conference whereby the main operational language is English, their respective tertiary institutions function with French as the primary form of communication. Each package included a self-addressed stamped envelope within which participants forwarded the completed questionnaires to the primary investigator. A follow-up telephone contact to all non-respondents was made after approximately four weeks and in situations where an athletic director was unable to speak by telephone an email was sent. If requested, the questionnaire was re-sent or emailed to the participant.

All participants’ responses, with the exception of the open-ended question responses, were coded using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to allow for calculation of descriptive statistics. In particular, all responses to the survey questions pertaining to Title IX

directives were coded with a score of 0 for “no opinion” and a score ranging from 1 for “strongly disagree” to 5 for “strongly agree”. As such, Pearson product-moment correlations were calculated between athletic directors’ ratings on these items and their years of experience.

To evaluate the participants’ perspectives on Title IX policy, all responses for the key directives were summarized across all participants such that two percentages were determined: one that combined the “agree” responses, and one that combined the “disagree” responses. In this way, the pattern of responding across the key policy tenets could be interpreted more effectively.

A qualitative analysis of the open-ended question also was performed. Very little information regarding proposed or implemented gender equity policy was evident in the information provided by the individual university athletic websites. As such, it was difficult to predict what themes or categories might exist in the responses. Therefore, inductive analysis was utilized. Patton (2002) described the processes of inductive analysis as “discovering patterns, themes, and categories in one’s data”, in contrast with deductive analysis where the analytic categories are stipulated beforehand, “according to an existing framework” (p.453). A line-by-line reading of the various responses sought out processes and actions projected or undertaken by the athletic directors. Similar coherent groupings were identified with markings of various colors to distinguish and extract the significant existing themes.

Results and Discussion

Title IX Policy directives

Table 1 provides the mean ratings (\underline{M}) and percentages of agreement and disagreement for athletic directors’ responses to all survey items rated. The athletic directors strongly agreed with a number of statements related to implementation of gender equity policy. First, almost all athletic directors agreed ($n = 36$; 97.3%; $\underline{M} = 4.8$) that gender equity should extend to all services and benefits (i.e., equipment and locker room use, practice times, etc). Athletic directors also reported high agreement ($n = 32$; 86.5%; $\underline{M} = 4.5$) with the idea equity policy should not require matching teams, but instead should consider the total participation opportunities for each gender at their institutions. In addition, although the mean ratings varied in terms of the extent of agreement with the statements that: privately funded teams should not be exempt from gender equity policy ($\underline{M} = 4.2$); budget concerns should not be an excuse for not complying with gender equity policy ($\underline{M} = 3.7$); and that elimination of teams as a measure to establish gender equity should be discouraged ($\underline{M} = 4.0$), 86.5% ($n = 32$) agreed with the first statement, and 75.6% ($n = 28$) agreed with the two latter statements. Furthermore, most participants agreed ($n = 36$; 97.3%; $\underline{M} = 4.4$) equity policy should address the three distinct components Title IX focuses on: athletic financial assistance, equivalence in other athletic benefits and opportunities, and effective accommodation of student interests and abilities.

Table 1 - *Descriptive Statistics for ratings for each questionnaire item (n=37)*

Questionnaire Item number	Mean (and standard deviation) Rating*	Percentage of Athletic Directors who Agreed or Strongly Agreed	Percentage of Athletic Directors who Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed
8	3.6 (1.19)	70.3	21.6
9	4.2 (0.90)	86.4	5.4
10	4.3 (0.98)	86.4	0
11	4.5 (0.81)	89.2	5.4
12	4.8 (0.46)	97.3	0
13	2.0 (1.33)	21.6	73.0
14	4.0 (1.17)	75.6	16.7
15	4.0 (1.09)	78.3	13.5
16	4.2 (0.81)	86.4	5.4
17	2.5 (1.54)	29.7	56.7
18	3.8 (1.42)	62.1	21.6
19	4.2 (0.74)	81.0	0
20	3.6 (1.26)	70.3	18.9
21	2.1 (1.53)	18.9	27.0
22	2.9 (1.44)	37.8	51.3
23	3.0 (1.42)	48.6	35.1
24	3.7 (1.24)	75.6	21.6
25	4.4 (0.76)	97.3	2.7

***5-point scale**

This agreement was strongly reflected in the responses from the open-ended question. The question was answered by 28 of the 37 respondents. In attempting to establish gender equity, athletic directors commented on a variety of proposed and implemented practices. These were coded and invariably two themes reflected components of Title IX: financial assistance; and athletic benefits and opportunities. Athletic directors explained they were either working towards or had established equity in the funding of teams and/or athletic scholarships. Secondly, they were striving or were successful in ensuring equity in athletic benefits and opportunities and cited efforts in areas such as team promotion, practice times, meal money, and the development and use of athletic facilities such as locker rooms.

Proportionality and the Three-Part Test

A majority of participants agreed with the United States policy's three major means of establishing institutional compliance (commonly referred to as the 'three-part test'): (1) proportionality (n = 26; 70.3%; \underline{M} = 3.6), (2) a continuing practice of program expansion (n = 32; 86.4%; \underline{M} = 4.2), and (3) the full and effective accommodation of the interests and abilities of students (n = 32; 86.4%; \underline{M} = 4.3). However, while a maximum of three participants disagreed with either the second and third of these components, more than twice as many disagreed with the first, (n = 8) proportionality.

Under Title IX, proportionality is one method a university can demonstrate compliance - participation opportunities for male and female students in numbers substantially proportionate to respective undergraduate enrolment figures. The CIS also proposed the concept of proportionality as a means for member universities to establish gender equity in participation. But this principle received the most opposition from participants in the study. In light of this finding, and the presence of large female enrolments, Canadian universities may face problems similar to their U.S. counterparts. Anderson, Cheslock, and Ehrenberg (2004) studied Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act data for 700 American institutions in NCAA divisions I, II, and III. They concluded issues associated with a school's failure to achieve proportionality were heightened if a large share of the undergraduates was women, and the institution had a football team. Over half the CIS universities have a football team, which could be viewed as an ominous sign. The influence of female undergraduates presents even more of a quandary for Canadian higher education, because figures from Statistics Canada (2005) indicated the majority of students on Canadian campuses were women. The latest national data, from 2003-04, reported 59% of university undergraduate students were women; a 7.5% increase in the overall enrolment of women in the span of one year. Such research was interpreted to mean the presence of female undergraduates will continue to increase disproportionately.

Furthermore, the athletic gender equity policy developed in Canada includes an institution's entire student body in its calculation of proportionality rather than the 'undergraduates only' accepted in U.S. Title IX policy. Doing so compounds the problem because graduate schools in Canadian universities have witnessed substantial growth in the number of female students in attendance, and in 2003/04 they represented 51% of graduate students.

Anderson et al. (2004) concluded, selective institutions (as measured by Barron's selectivity ranking²), larger institutions, and institutions with larger budgets, and those with high tuition and fees, typically had smaller proportion gaps. Thus, while some Canadian universities might achieve compliance in terms of athletic gender equity it seems unlikely to happen through means of the proportionality dynamic the CIS has considered.

In accordance with CIS policy, Canadian institutions had an alternative choice for pursuing participation gender equity. This was the principle of establishing equity with opportunities that were 50/50. As such, an institution could satisfy participation equity if the same number of athletic opportunities were made available for each gender regardless of student enrolment figures on its campus.

This concern centering on proportionality was reiterated in the third and final theme (athletic opportunities) in the responses to the open-ended question. As such it was not surprising that some participants stated they did not pursue substantial proportionality because gender equity had been achieved through a 50/50 balance in athletic opportunities for campus athletes. An examination of Title IX history in the United States revealed that strategy was limited for ensuring compliance.

Orleans (1996) explained the concept of substantial proportionality in Title IX was based on civil rights legislation in Title VI. In working to integrate U.S. school systems, an approach

² Barron's provides a selectivity ranking composed of the freshman class's SAT and ACT scores, their high school rank, the college's required minimum high-school GPA, and the percentage of applicant's admitted.

was used whereby school populations were examined on the basis of racial composition. The percentage of African-American children in attendance should have reflected the number of families living in a neighborhood the school served. Such a strategy connected opportunities directly to the numbers of individuals in existence. Thus, adoption of this approach to create equity in athletic gender participation appeared reasonable; the percentage of female athletes at an institution being predicated upon the total number matriculating. Interestingly, when discussing Title IX's acceptable use of proportionality for the purpose of creating female role models, Yuracko (2002) wrote the following:

Indeed, as a theoretical matter, there does not seem to be any reason why proportionality, rather than a critical mass of varsity female athletes, is necessary to have the desired role-modeling effects. It may be, though, that proportionality makes sense as a pragmatic way to operationalize the desired role-modeling effects. Because we do not know how many female college athletes we actually need in order to have the desired role-modeling effects, proportionality makes sense as a pragmatic compromise (p. 74).

The author implied a critical mass of varsity female athletes could be a sound strategy for achieving the goal of role-modeling effects. Thus, the CIS acceptance of a strategy of 50/50 opportunities appeared sensible in this respect. However, adoption of such an alternative strategy to proportionality created a concern that the CIS had lost sight of the main focus of athletic gender equity – participation.

Kimberly A. Yuracko is an expert in Title IX law and an assistant professor at Northwestern University School of Law in Chicago. In response to a question asking if 50/50 opportunities would be acceptable in place of substantial proportionality, she explained how the two strategies were different in terms of the goals they ultimately sought to achieve:

The approach would probably satisfy my role-modeling concerns. The approach might satisfy perceived fairness concerns if people understood the distribution to mean that women and men as groups were both equally important and equally entitled to a particular (and necessarily gendered) good. The distribution is, however, more group-focused in its orientation than is the current proportionality approach and would probably not work in the United States since we are so focused on rights being attached to individuals not to groups. Therefore, even in the Title IX context we talk about rights to participate as attaching to individual women and men, no individual woman should have a proportionately greater chance of participating than an individual man ... In this country, I do not think we could simply say that women and men get the same numbers of spots because doing so would be to clearly attach benefits to groups as groups rather than to individuals (even if necessarily as members of groups in the Title IX context) (K. A. Yuracko, personal communication, March 31, 2005).

This argument that attaching rights to groups was not the same as attaching them to individuals was illustrated in the aftermath debate of the American *Secretary's Commission on Opportunity in Athletics* (2003). In an unnumbered recommendation, the Commission encouraged the U.S. Department of Education to explore additional ways institutions could demonstrate equity beyond the existing three-part test (proportionality; program expansion; accommodation). One recommendation stated, "Institutions governed by Title IX standards, as one approach to meeting the standard of proportionality, should allot 50 % of their participation

opportunities for men and 50 % for women. A variance of 2 to 3 percent in compliance with this standard would then be allowed” (U.S. Department of Education, 2003, p. 40).

Criticism of that proposal included two of the Secretary’s own commissioners: Donna de Varona and Julie Foudy. In their published dissent it was believed to be problematic for schools to allocate evenly 50 % of participation opportunities to men and women without considering the gender distribution in a student body. They explained, “This proposal would, in effect, allow schools to impose a ceiling of 47% of athletic opportunities and scholarships for women – no matter how large the percentage of women in the student body or how many women want to play. Because women typically comprise 53% of the student body at Division IA schools ... this proposal will inevitably result in losses from the opportunities to which women and girls are entitled under current law. The losses are, of course, likely to be greater at the numerous colleges at which women comprise a higher percentage than 53% of undergraduates – including some powerhouse institutions, such as Florida State University and the University of Georgia, where women are 57% of the student body” (de Varona & Foudy, 2003, p. 15).

The proposal did not receive enough support during actual debate to be put forth as a recommendation to the Secretary. Furthermore, it became evident it was not going to gain favor from the majority of athletic directorates currently working with Title IX policy directives. The potential loss of individual opportunities was perceived to be far greater for women than any possible gains they might achieve in a system whereby opportunities were allotted in terms of 50/50 participation designations, and it could have relegated women to 47% of the actual opportunities.

Unfortunately, a comparable policy proposal has been accepted in Canadian intercollegiate athletics and resulting campus scenarios may have similar implications for female athletes. The CIS established gender equity policy allowed two avenues for member schools to pursue gender equity participation – proportionality and 50/50, but within a variance of 10%. This was 7% greater than the proposed variance American policymakers put forth and the potential damage to opportunities for women in Canadian university athletics was striking. The CIS did not publish statistics depicting numbers for schools achieving proportionality in athletics, so it was not known how a 10% variance affected the numbers between male and female athletes and the respective student bodies they represented on their campuses. However, the current study may determine the negative impact a 10% variance would have on female athletic participation rates at universities that wished to pursue athletic gender participation utilizing a 50/50 opportunities model. Statistics for the 50 universities in the CIS revealed use of this model could be extremely detrimental for female student-athletes (see Table 2) (Canadian Interuniversity Sport, 2005a). In allowing for such a wide variance, it theoretically meant Canadian universities could establish athletic gender equity that accepted participation rates whereby 60% of men occupied opportunities and 40% of women held the remainder. The 10% variance enabled 22 of the 50 CIS institutions, nearly half, to claim they were gender equitable in terms of participation. To put this into some perspective, using the upper-end 3% variance proposed by the U.S. Commission on Opportunities in Athletics, only four CIS schools would be deemed gender equitable for participation. It was evident that allowing 50/50 opportunities in place of substantial proportionality and the use of a 10% variance in both strategies were harmful to the underrepresented gender in Canadian university athletics.

Table 2 - *University Percentage of Student Athletes by Gender*

University	Total # CIS Athletes	# of CIS Male Student-Athletes		# CIS Female Student-Athletes	
		#	%	#	%
Acadia	181	86	48%	95	52%
Alberta	371	197	53%	174	47%
Bishop's	120	61	51%	59	49%
Brandon	26	14	54%	12	46%
Brock	237	96	41%	141	59%
Calgary	268	165	62%	103	38%
Carleton	117	50	43%	67	57%
Concordia	211	124	59%	87	41%
Dalhousie	243	123	51%	120	49%
Guelph	432	228	53%	204	47%
Lakehead	137	84	61%	53	39%
Laurentian	115	45	39%	70	61%
Laurier	286	155	54%	131	46%
Laval	258	165	64%	93	36%
Lethbridge	197	85	43%	112	57%
Manitoba	273	163	60%	110	40%
McGill	357	174	49%	183	51%
McMaster	313	170	54%	143	46%
Memorial	139	80	58%	59	42%
Moncton	140	78	56%	62	44%
Montreal	161	108	67%	53	33%
Mount Allison	135	85	63%	50	37%
Nipissing	40	20	50%	20	50%
Ottawa	281	132	47%	149	53%
Queen's	372	194	52%	178	48%
Regina	260	148	57%	112	43%
RMC	51	39	76%	12	24%
Ryerson	133	83	62%	50	38%
Saskatchewan	323	192	59%	131	41%
Simon Fraser	115	77	67%	38	33%

Table 2 (continued) - *University percentage of student athletes by gender*

University	Total # CIS Athletes	# of CIS Male Student-Athletes		# CIS Female Student-Athletes	
Sherbrooke	255	157	62%	98	38%
Saint Mary's	257	136	53%	121	47%
StFX	225	123	55%	102	45%
St. Thomas	47	27	57%	20	43%
Toronto	362	188	52%	174	48%
Trent	89	24	27%	65	73%
UBC	262	142	54%	120	46%
UCCB	73	32	44%	41	56%
UNB	212	97	46%	115	54%
UPEI	143	57	40%	86	60%
UQAM	69	36	52%	33	48%
UQTR	72	50	69%	22	31%
Victoria	157	59	38%	98	62%
Waterloo	374	212	57%	162	43%
Western	422	221	52%	201	48%
Windsor	316	178	56%	138	44%
Winnipeg	53	28	53%	25	47%
York	321	171	53%	150	47%
Totals	10092	5404	54%	4688	46%

Perspective Based on Athletic Director Experience

As indicated above, a high percentage of athletic directors agreed with many of the tenets of Title IX policy, however, when correlations between their agreement ratings and years of experience were examined, certain items stood out as issues for more experienced athletic directors. In fact, five statistically significant relationships were found between years of experience as an athletic director and responses to particular key directives of Title IX. More experienced athletic directors were less likely to agree that private funding should not exclude particular teams ($r = -.35, p = .034$). Second, they also were less likely to agree there should be an athletic governing body outside and independent of the academic institutions that would establish and enforce gender equity policy ($r = -.33, p = .048$). Third, they were less likely to agree that a nationally organized effort was required to establish gender equity guidelines ($r = -.32, p = .051$). Fourth, they were less likely to agree that sanctions should be applied to institutions that did not comply with gender equity ($r = -.41, p = .012$). Finally, they were less

likely to agree with the statement: “budgetary concerns should not be accepted as an excuse for failure to implement gender equity” ($r = -.38, p = .019$).³

Disagreement on one or more aspects of gender equity policy on the part of senior athletic directors could have profound implications because the total number of athletic directors is reasonably small ($N = 50$). Consequently, standardized implementation and centralized enforcement of any athletic gender equity policy should consider minority views but not allow them to impede the process. The paramount objective should be a coherent policy consistent across Canadian universities.

Tangentially, it is important to point out that a majority of Canadian athletic directors are men, especially those with the most experience. This issue has been a concern for some time and despite research about retention factors in athletic management the underrepresentation of women in athletic administration positions has not changed dramatically (Myers & Doherty, 2007; Sagas & Cunningham, 2004; Whisenant, Pedersen, & Obenour, 2002). Pastore, Inglis, and Danylchuk (1996) noted in 1994-95 13% of CIAU/CIS athletic directors were women, roughly the same percentage as existed more than a decade later during this study. This fact indicates potential issues for consideration regarding from whom and how leadership would be found. Equity in Canadian university athletics might see its biggest strides when there is parity among athletic directors in terms of gender and longevity (Coakley, 2001; Hall, Cullen & Slack, 1989).

Conclusions

The purpose of this paper was to examine the perspectives of Canadian university athletic directors regarding U.S. Title IX athletic policy directives. The importance of the research is demonstrated by the fact the CIS' own *Equity Practices Questionnaire* (CIS, 2005b) determined equity statements specific to athletic departments were found at only 58% ($n = 25$) of the forty-three reporting institutions. The most common types referenced equitable practices within the strategic and operational plans (28%; $n = 12$) or within the mission, vision, or core value statements (14%; $n = 6$) of an athletic department. The implications are that many female student-athletes at Canadian institutions may not receive equal consideration in areas such as financial athletic scholarships, practice schedules, facilities, and team promotion.

Interpretation of data from this investigation indicates Canadian postsecondary athletic directors supported, in principle, the Title IX directives that promote gender equity in the United States. However, it was apparent both the approach to establishing a means of compliance and an outright rejection of some policy directives on the part of senior athletic directors could prove problematic to any implementation process. The present situation would become further complicated if flawed gender equity strategies were implemented. Thus, the CIS would benefit by designating more resources to the study of gender equity policy. Its policy development has embraced some similarities to Title IX, but the governing body has selected only the Equities in Athletics Disclosure Act for a framework to investigate athletic gender equity in American

³ Interestingly, three of these five items also had the lowest percentage of agreement for athletic directors. Specifically, across the athletic directors in this study, only 43.2% agreed that an independent body should govern gender equity policy; only 62.1% agreed there was need for a national effort to develop guidelines; and only 70.3% agreed that sanctions should be imposed on institutions that fail to comply with gender equity policy.

universities. That Act is important, but limited in terms of studying the concept due to its quantitative nature. It is important the CIS broaden its base of inquiry and scholarship to include works like the *Title IX Athletic Investigator's Manual* (Bonnette & Daniel, 1990) and the *Secretary's Commission on Opportunity in Athletics* (U.S. Department of Education, 2003) that outline and explain the theoretical underpinnings and fundamental areas of expansive athletic gender equity policy.

Finally, based on the findings of this study, a number of recommendations may be made for future research. Although the present study revealed more experienced athletic directors were less likely to agree with particular Title IX policy directives, a specific rationale for such decisions was not readily apparent. Further qualitative research in the form of interviews with CIS athletic directors is advocated. This should provide greater insight for investigators and subsequently enable them to analyze how similar criticism alleging potential policy flaws has been specifically addressed in American higher education and the U.S. judicial system. Secondly, future research examining the perspectives of CIS female athletes also should be conducted. These principal participants are affected directly by policymakers' decisions so their insights are significant. Their analysis might help further distinguish the degree to which problems surrounding athletic gender equity exist.

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Appendix A

CIS Gender Equity Goals

1. That Canadian Interuniversity Sport be sensitive to and seek out opportunities for gender balance when identifying members for committees to reach an objective of no less than 40% representation of one gender.
2. That Canadian Interuniversity Sport increase the marketability and profile of women's programs and ensure financial resources are available for this purpose.
3. That Canadian Interuniversity Sport ensure there is gender and geographical balance in the ratio of support personnel to match the athlete participation ratio for Canadian Interuniversity Sport sanctioned international events.
4. That Canadian Interuniversity Sport promote member institutions to assume a leadership role in their local and regional communities to encourage young women to pursue sport as a career option.
5. That Canadian Interuniversity Sport continues to participate in and lead the development and perpetuation of women in coaching initiatives at the post-secondary level.
6. That Canadian Interuniversity Sport use equity as a basic principle when considering developing any type of partnerships with other agencies or organizations.
7. That Canadian Interuniversity Sport ensures all persons are portrayed in an equitable way in all promotional materials and communications.
8. That Canadian Interuniversity Sport safeguards the rights of its members and its employees to equal treatment without unlawful discrimination or harassment.
9. That Canadian Interuniversity Sport promotes gender equity in the implementation of Canadian Interuniversity Sports awards policy.
10. That Canadian Interuniversity Sport maintains a balance in the competitive opportunities available to both genders at the national level.
11. That Canadian Interuniversity Sport ensures that the bilingualism policy is adhered to at all events, functions, and meetings and in all publications.
12. That Canadian Interuniversity Sport be sensitive to cultural diversity when scheduling all events, functions and meetings (p.2).

Appendix B

Athletic Gender Equity Survey

Thank you for taking the time to respond to these questions. Please answer each one to the best of your ability. Your responses will be kept in the strictest confidence and presented in aggregate form in the dissertation study and any subsequent research publication.

1. How many years experience have you had as an athletic director [or equivalent title] at the postsecondary level?

- 5 years or less
- 6 – 10 years
- 11 – 15 years
- 16 – 20 years
- more than 20 years

2. Please indicate your gender:

- Male
- Female

3. What is the total number of Canadian Interuniversity Sport [CIS] recognized teams on your campus?

_____ Number of teams

4. What is the total number of female CIS athletic teams on your campus?

_____ Number of female teams

5. What is the total number of CIS recognized athletes on your campus?

_____ Number of athletes

6. What is the total number of female CIS athletes on your campus?

_____ Number of female athletes

7. What is the approximate number of full-time undergraduate students on your campus?

- 500 – 3000
- 3001 – 6000
- 6001 – 9000
- 9001-12000
- 12001 – 15000
- 15001 – 18000
- 18001 – 21000
- 21001 – 24000
- 24000 +

For questions 8 – 26 please consider the following definition of ‘gender equity’ in your response:

Gender equity is the principle and practice of fair and equitable allocation of resources and opportunities to both females and males. Gender equity eliminates practices that are barriers to full participation of either gender. A primary goal of gender equity is to provide all individuals with access and opportunity to a full range of activities, thus enabling them to realize their human potential.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following 18 statements:

8. Athletic departments should pursue gender equity so that the male/female ratio of athletes is proportional to the male/female ratio of the undergraduate student enrolment.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- No opinion

9. An institution should demonstrate a continuing practice of program expansion for members of an underrepresented gender until equity is established in the form of participatory opportunities.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- No opinion

10. An institution could demonstrate its pursuit of gender equity by proving full and effective accommodation of the interests and abilities of women on the campus and among its potential students.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- No opinion

11. Successful gender equity policy should not require each team be matched with a corresponding team for the other gender. Instead, it should consider the total participation opportunities offered each gender by an institution's athletic program.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- No opinion

12. Institutions should ensure gender equity exists in the services and benefits (i.e., equipment, locker rooms, practice times, etc.) provided to student athletes.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- No opinion

13. The elimination of athletic teams to comply with gender equity should be an acceptable practice.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- No opinion

14. The elimination of athletic teams to comply with gender equity should be a disfavoured practice.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- No opinion

15. Equity policy should be based on a framework including all the institution's athletic teams and not involving the exclusion of some teams. (example: the exclusion of income generating teams or those with large rosters; i.e.: football)

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- No opinion

16. Private funding of an individual athletic team would not exclude that particular team from being considered in any gender equity policy governing the overall athletic program of a university.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- No opinion

17. An athletic governing body outside and independent of the academic institutions themselves must be responsible for the establishment and enforcement of gender equity policy.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- No opinion

18. A nationally organized effort is required for the establishment of clear, consistent, and understandable written guidelines concerning gender equity in athletics.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- No opinion

19. University athletic departments should be provided with a standardized form of self-evaluation that would allow each institution to determine its status towards gender equity compliance.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- No opinion

20. Sanctions should be applied to institutions that do not comply with gender equity policy in athletics.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- No opinion

21. The implementation of athletic gender equity policy in Canadian universities is likely to lead to lawsuits filed with relation to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- No opinion

22. Equity policy should provide guidance regarding athletics in general but it must deal specifically with athletic scholarships.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- No opinion

23. Gender equity in athletic scholarships should be assessed by dividing the total dollar amount of aid awarded to male athletes by the number of male athletes and dividing the total dollar amount of aid awarded to female athletes by the number of female athletes and comparing the two results.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- No opinion

24. Budgetary concerns should not be accepted as an excuse for failure to implement gender equity.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- No opinion

25. Equity policy should address three distinct aspects of a university's athletic program: athletic financial assistance, equivalence in other athletic benefits and opportunities, and effective accommodation of student interests and abilities.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- No opinion

26. Please briefly outline any specific proposed or implemented policy initiatives regarding athletic gender equity at your institution.