ATHLETICS FUNDING
AN IN DEPTH LOOK AT FRESNO STATE’S ATHLETIC BUDGET
Title IX affects athletics budget

By Ana Mendoza
The Collegian

Title IX was designed to guarantee women and men equal benefits and opportunities in all government-funded institutions. Many intercollegiate sports have been eliminated and Title IX has been blamed for it.

Title IX, a federal gender equality law, was passed in 1972, but Fresno State did not comply with the law in 1990. Fresno State joined the Western Athletic Conference in 1991.

Under President John Welty’s tenure, Fresno State became part of Division 1-A. To be a Division I-L or II university, the school has to follow Title IX. If it fails to do so, it would not be able to compete in athletics.

Title IX applies to all divisions in athletics,” Dr. Welty said.

Title IX is a federal law that the institution must comply with if it wishes to continue to receive federal funds. Senior associate director of Athletics Beto Bowers said, “Title IX applies to all areas and programs of the university, not just athletics.”

Budget cuts, Division I requirements and Title IX have contributed to the elimination of many popular male sports, including baseball, volleyball, water polo and wrestling.

Title IX has helped the development of women’s sports. Before the law was enacted, there were less than 30,000 women athletes; the number has since increased to 150,000. The number of women’s college sports has doubled.

According to ESPN, before Title IX the only professional women’s sports had been tennis and golf. Today women have professional “leagues for soccer, volleyball, bowling and two for basketball. Women have even made inroads in the traditionally male sport of boxing.

To comply with Title IX, a university’s recruiting and athletic teams to make athletes must reflect its female to male ratio. The 1972 law mandates that the university have more female students as well as female athletes. To be a NCAA Division I Football School, a Division member, you must sponsor at least 16 sports and also meet the requirement for the minimum number of men’s and women’s sports.

Fresno State is currently one of the few state universities that have achieved athletic success in Division I-A, but at a very great cost. To comply with Division I require- ments, according to the State University from 1994 to 2000, Fresno State spent $8.3 million renovating and constructing facilities for Bulldog football, “It’s an awesome pro- gram—every school needs to have it, it is not just football, and it brings spirit to the campus. It’s not just not being counted for Title IX because you just can’t not have football. It brings spirit to the campus. It’s not just not being counted for Title IX because you just can’t not have football.”

Money spent on athletic programs at Fresno State in 2008 was $45,000, $157,000 cash, $256,000, and $256,000, respectively. Since 2000, even more money has been spent on athletic programs at Fresno State, planning a $9.5 million building for new track facilities and labs that will complement the $7.5 million aquatics center that is currently under construction on the southwest corner of Cedar and Barstow Avenues. According to The Fresno Bee, these facilities are needed to comply with Title IX.

In the spring of 2008, students were asked for a $50 fee increase to help the athletic department comply with Division I requirements, but students voted against it. Subsequently, the Campus Fee Advisory Committee passed a $40 fee increase for the 2008-2009 school year. Students said they just were not sure how much money would be spent. "It’s an awesome program—every school needs to have it, it is not just football, and it brings spirit to the campus. It’s not just not being counted for Title IX because you just can’t not have football. It brings spirit to the campus. It’s not just not being counted for Title IX because you just can’t not have football.”
Fresno State student athletics fees 3rd lowest in WAC

By Anna Jacobsen
The Collegian

Fresno State is the only school in the Western Athletic Conference to charge students for football games, and some students think they're getting a bad deal.

Chaster Harrison, a Fresno State criminology senior, said, “There are other programs here, like other sporting events that are free, but football is not free. That’s not fair.”

What students like Harrison don’t realize, however, is that they are actually paying less for athletics than students at other WAC schools, which charge students not through ticket revenues but through athletics fees.

In a recent article, USA Today ranked WAC schools by student athletics fees. In the ranking, which examined fees from the 2008-09 fiscal year, Fresno State ranked fourth lowest in athletics fees charged to students. Since those statistics were compiled, Fresno State has dropped to third lowest in athletics fees.

At the lowest end of the student spectrum is Louisiana Tech, which doesn’t charge students fees for athletics. However, like every WAC school besides Fresno State, Louisiana Tech provides free football tickets to students.

Hawaii was tied with Louisiana Tech for fees charged in the 2008-09 fiscal year, but in a decision announced this July, Hawaii will begin charging students in 2011 $100 a year for athletics fees. This change has bumped Hawaii up to third lowest in the WAC for fees charged.

Fresno State comes in at $70 per semester, part of the $62 IRA fee and $45.50 student body fee students pay each semester. Each year, students at Fresno State pay a total of $78 for athletics.

The highest student athletics fee in the WAC is at the University of Idaho, which charges an average of $180 per student each year.

At Boise State, home of the WAC’s most successful football program, students pay an average of $150 a year in athletics fees. Boise’s football team is currently ranked No. 4 nationally in the BCS and AP standings.

Each Fresno State student can purchase a football ticket for $15 per game.

Paul Oliaro, vice president for student affairs at Fresno State, said that the price of student football tickets is not going to increase any time soon.

“ package of 500 or 600 or 700 [football] tickets each year for $25,000,” Oliaro said.

He added that except for football, students have free admission to all Fresno State games.

“Students now have access to all other sports with no charge. That includes men’s basketball tickets as well as women’s basketball tickets sold for football tickets.”

Fresno State athletics director Paul Ladwig offered insight as to why Fresno State charges for football tickets. “[Football] is a revenue source for the athletic department. The student fee covers the rest of the sports. There’s a correlation between the revenue stream via the student ticket price and the student fee.”

Fresno State student fees for athletics are the third lowest in the WAC. This information shows the total fees for each school in the conference. All data was compiled by the USA Today. Except for Hawaii, which came from the school’s website.

WAC settlement has benefits

By Ben Ingersoll
The Collegian

In the wake of a campus-wide financial cutback, Fresno State athletics sought a huge monetary break on Oct. 27 when it avoided a $5 million lawsuit in an agreement to stay in the Western Athletic Conference for one more year.

On Aug. 18, the Mountain West Conference sent formal invitations to both Fresno State and Nevada to join its conference, a plan conference commissioner Craig Thompson hoped would come into effect starting next season.

Fresno WAC commissioner Karl Benson had other plans.

Benson lashed out at both Fresno State and Nevada, saying the move was “selfish” and immediately pursued a lawsuit with both schools. The details of the lawsuit included the WAC’s threat to fine each school being forced to split a $10 million exit fee for not reaching the June 30 deadline.

The lawsuit included each school being forced to split $10 million exit fee for not reaching the June 30 deadline. The lawsuit also included both schools having to pay $100,000 each for violation of the WAC’s rules.

“Normally when there is a change in conference, there is an entrance fee in addition to an exit fee,” Welty said. “In this case, we’re paying an exit fee, it’s a modest exit fee in terms of what would normally occur. There would be no entry fee.”

Whatever revenue Fresno State and Nevada incur during the 2011-12 football season, it will have to forfeit it to the WAC.

Both Benson and Welty said that by entering the MWC, the university would generate more revenue than it would in the WAC.

“We will realize a dramatic increase in revenue from the WAC to the MWC,” Welty said. “So, essentially the first five years [we’ll get just a little bit less] than we normally have.”

But at the same time we’re going to realize a very significant increase by entering the Mountain West.”

While many students are concerned with the move to a new conference, Welty expressed that jumping from the WAC to the MWC will benefit students academically as well.

“The move to the Mountain West will be very positive, not only for the athletic program but [for] the entire university,” Welty said. “Certainly the universities [Fresno State] will be associated with and are recognized for their academic programs.”

“I think there’s the opportunity to build academic cooperation and other programs as we move forward.”
By Tara Albert  
The Collegian

It’s no secret that budget problems have plagued the California State University system, impacting all areas of the universities throughout the state. So how does Fresno State’s athletics department fare, and how does the university spend its money?

**Distributing funds**

According to the Fresno State and the University Board of Trustees, the athletic department has the primary responsibility for its own budget. However, athletic revenues make up only a portion of the university’s overall revenue. Student fees, state insurance, and private donations are just a few of the areas which are typically allocated to various departments.

In 2008-2009, student fees support athletic operations, operations and maintenance projects and technology funding, according to the Fresno State Chancellor’s Office. Athletics expenses also included salaries and benefits, marketing and communications, and grants. Student affairs made up about 43 percent of the athletics department’s budget. Athletics expenses include salaries and benefits, marketing and communications, and grants. Student affairs made up about 43 percent of the athletics department’s budget.

**Athletics revenue**

For the 2008-2009 and 2007-2008 budget years, the amount of funds for athletics was 1.79 percent and 1.85 percent, respectively. Instruction and academic support were at 70.17 percent and 69.52 percent.

Moffitt said small adjustments between the budget areas each year were normal. “As you’re in the universities, that’s what happens,” he said. But in early 2008, the committee was disbanded and Welty established fixed allocations for the major program areas. The athletics allocation was set at 1.86 percent per year.

**Trends in the nation and the WAC**

According to a database created by the U.S. Department of Education Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act, Fresno State coaches have some of the highest salaries in the WAC. The average salary for head and assistant coaches for men’s teams during the 2009-2010 school year was $49,173 at Louisiana Tech University. Over all, Fresno State’s support of its athletics program is fairly consistent with that of other Football Bowl Subdivision athletics programs between 2008-2009 by the NCAA, almost 35 percent of revenue for Division-I intercollegiate athletics departments. The funds were primarily used to support the Athletics department, the vice presidents and directors of selected major program areas. Those leaders then provide the second level of allocations to their departments, divvying up the funds to department heads and deans.

In 1993, a committee comprised of deans and faculty was formed to annually decide the percentages of funds allocated to major program areas, according to the University Board of Trustees.

**‘Dogs athletics spending on par with rest of nation**

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**Impacts of budget struggles**

Coleman Barnes, the executive director of the Bulldog Foundation, said the foundation is donation-based, receiving funds from individuals and corporations in the Central Valley and beyond. He said the Bulldog Foundation has given athletes scholarships for 60 years, but tuition increases have put that streak in jeopardy.

“One of the great challenges we have now is that tuition keeps increasing,” he said. “When that happens, that means that the school’s budget allocation is reduced and that means that the Bulldog Foundation has less money to support the athletics department.”

“Generally, the greatest need of women’s teams, the lowest average salary was $35,173 at Louisiana Tech University. Over all, Fresno State’s support of its athletics program is fairly consistent with that of other Football Bowl Subdivision athletics programs between 2008-2009 by the NCAA, almost 35 percent of revenue for Division-I intercollegiate athletics departments.

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