



## Task Force Report

August 30, 2000

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### Charge to the Task Force; Background

Christine Grant has provided visionary leadership to the University of Iowa Women's Athletics Department throughout the 27 years of its existence. With the announcement of her retirement, it is appropriate to look to the future and evaluate what administrative structure will best meet the needs of student athletes at the University. President Coleman asked a group of individuals to serve on an Ad Hoc Task Force and review these issues. President Coleman's charge to the Task Force reads as follows:

Christine Grant has announced her retirement from athletics and will, after a well-deserved sabbatical, return to teaching as part of a phased retirement plan. Christine has been a tireless advocate for gender equity in women's sports and she has served the University of Iowa with great distinction. As an institution, we owe it to her to assure that we continue to move forward to assure the same opportunities for young women in sports that have long been available to young men.

After several discussions with Ann Rhodes and with Christine, I have decided to appoint an ad hoc task force to advise me about the best way to continue our progress toward gender equity in the future. In short, I want this group to examine how our women's athletic programs should be administered in the post-Grant era. We have two basic choices. Keep the programs separate, or integrate the programs under a single athletics director. Of course, there are variations under either scenario. However, I anticipate that the task force will be able to weigh all the important considerations and make a recommendation to me.

Ann Rhodes and Bonnie Slatton have agreed to co-chair the task force. I have indicated that it will be important to review the gender equity plan presented earlier this year by Christine. The following groups or individuals should also be consulted: coaches and personnel in the women's and men's programs, the Iowa Plus Board, members of the

BICOA, the director of the national I-Club (and any board members deemed necessary), Michael New, Bob Bowsby and Christine Grant, among others determined by the committee.

As an initial matter, the task force recognized that the University of Iowa has a long history of offering competitive athletic opportunities to women students. The 1916 University yearbook features women's basketball and women's field hockey, both of which have continued to bring distinction to the University. Although opportunities for sport involvement have continued during this century, such opportunities were primarily offered through the academic department of Physical Education and Dance and did not include the opportunity to participate in athletic sport at the varsity level. The environment for women in sport changed significantly, however, in 1972, with the passage of Title IX. Title IX prohibits sex discrimination in intercollegiate athletics.

At the University of Iowa, a separate varsity intercollegiate athletic program was established in 1973 under the leadership of Dr. Christine Grant. Dr. Grant had been a leader in the Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women and was a recognized expert on Title IX. Dr. Grant's philosophy and practice has influenced the women's program in significant ways. First, achieving gender equity has been of primary importance. Second, ties to the academic departments were maintained (in the early years of the program, almost all the coaches held academic appointments and Dr. Grant reported jointly to the Department of Physical Education and Dance and to the University Vice President for Finance.) Early reviews recommending that two athletic departments be maintained stressed that the women's program was "primarily an educational activity" while the men's program had an outreach function. The appeal of this outreach function and the public interest it generates has been critical in generating the revenue which supports the athletics enterprise. Finally, an effort was made to treat all women's sports equally, employing an organizational management structure and philosophy with all women's coaches reporting to the AD.

These philosophical and practical aspects of the women's program have distinguished it from the men's program to a certain degree. Nevertheless, today, both programs are identical in the need to assist all student-athletes in achieving a sound academic experience leading to a baccalaureate degree. The programs also share the goal of reaching the top 20 in the nation in all sports. This goal gives rise to a corresponding need to promote intercollegiate athletics to ensure a constant and stable source of revenue to sustain and improve the competitive level of the programs.

Both programs must rely largely on ticket income generated by the football and basketball teams, earnings from the Big Ten Conference and the NCAA, and individual and corporate fund-raising. As the costs of sustaining nationally competitive programs have soared, it has been a challenge to find adequate financial resources to reach the University's goals, including the goal of gender equity among women's and men's sports.

Mindful of these realities, the following principles and recommendations were agreed to by the task force and provide a context for its consideration of the future organizational structure of the program.

The Task Force:

- Recognizes that the financial stability of the athletics programs

- must be maintained.
- Reaffirms the University's commitment to offering the highest quality of opportunity for women and men student-athletes.
  - Recognizes the history and commitment to women's athletics at the University of Iowa and recommends that the University maintain a position of national leadership in achieving gender equity.
  - Recognizes the quality of and dedication of the coaching and support staff members in both the men's and women's athletic programs.
  - Recommends that any organization of the athletics departments reflect the University's commitment to academic integrity, rules compliance, financial stability, competitive excellence, and gender equity.
  - Recommends that any administrative structure must provide for representation by and advocacy for women student-athletes and promote flexibility to meet the particular needs of women student-athletes and male student-athletes in Olympic sports.
  - Recommends there be no reduction in the number of sports teams available for participation by male and female student-athletes.
  - Recommends that significant increased revenues derived from future NCAA and Big 10 media contracts and any savings realized from organizational change must be directed toward taking the next steps toward gender equity.

As directed by President Coleman, the following groups or individuals were consulted: student-athletes, coaches and personnel in the women's and men's programs, representatives of the U of I Alumni and U of I Foundation, faculty, staff and student leadership, the Board in Control of Athletics, Christine Grant and Bob Bowsby. In all meetings, individuals and groups were assured that neither the President nor the Task Force had preconceived notions about the final recommendation, and that we were interested in their viewpoints on the matter. In general, the internal constituencies recommended that we retain separate programs while integrating many of the services provided (sports medicine, student services, etc.). The external groups generally supported one department, but believed that a highly visible woman should be hired in the athletics department. Both groups strongly endorsed a central budgeting system for the athletics programs.

As a result of these initial interviews, the Task Force felt that the report would be greatly enhanced by consulting with other Big Ten institutions, as well as peer institutions throughout the nation. Institutions were very forthcoming in providing organizational structures and budgetary processes for our review. Common to each of these reports was a belief in the strength and value of a centralized athletic budget system. In addition, the Task Force reviewed data provided by a national longitudinal research report<sup>1</sup> which links the decline of women in administrative positions in athletics to organizational structure. The Task Force also reviewed the NCAA Certification Report (1997) and the Gender Equity Reports (1998, 1999). In addition to the meetings with the groups noted, the Task Force met seven times for lengthy discussion.

Based on the comments of those consulted and our analysis, the task force unanimously believes that the lack of financial certainty for women's athletics must be addressed,

regardless of the ultimate organizational structure for athletics.

### **Recommendation #1**

Centralized Review and consolidation of financial management of athletics. The task force unanimously recommends a change in the current athletic budgeting, expenditure review, and financial planning system to encompass a process similar to that employed by other major universities. Preparation of the budget, periodic review of expenditures and evaluation of major commitments would be conducted by a "budget group" consisting of athletic and University leadership designated by the President. Under such a scenario, all sources of athletic income would be combined and viewed as a single fund for allocation to University athletic programs. An evaluation of all major financial commitments would be undertaken, including an analysis of facilities and program enhancements for impact on women's and men's Olympic sports.<sup>2</sup>

#### Explanation:

Over the past twenty years, the women's department has enjoyed an excellent reputation in quality and competitiveness. The women's athletics budget has increased substantially overall, but the year-to-year budgeting process has been difficult due to variation in sources and amounts of funding from one year to the next. Women's athletics has been supported primarily through the general University fund and the athletics facilities fund. At some times in its history significant support has come from the general fund, at other times, general fund support has declined dramatically, only to increase in recent years with a renewed commitment to gender equity, manifested primarily in the additions of rowing and soccer teams.<sup>3</sup> The level of support from the athletics facilities budget has also varied, remaining constant six years during the mid 1990's at \$3,310,000 and increasing to \$3,628,000 in 2000-01.<sup>4</sup> In many years, either the general fund or the men's athletic department has needed to contribute several hundred thousand dollars as the fiscal year ended to maintain support for the women's program.

This financial variability has made it difficult to plan effectively and has adversely affected the university's goal to bring about gender equity. The fact that there is no common budgeting with a single format has also presented difficulties. Financial planning and management must occur within a common set of priorities and encompass the flexibility to meet the needs of both programs. The Task Force believes that the institutional goals of equity and accountability can best be met by having a single framework and system for budgeting and expenditures for all sports.

### **Recommendation #2**

Under the foregoing budgetary framework, a majority of the task force recommends the integration of the women's department under the overall supervision of the current men's athletics director, who, in turn, will be charged to form a search committee and hire a senior women's athletic administrator with responsibilities as "Chief of Staff." She will

serve in the Athletics Director's absence and will guide the transition of the women's program within the combined department to ensure the University's goals are met. The need for such an appointment is self evident. It is imperative that women maintain a leadership role in Iowa athletics.

Explanation: A key goal in management, either within the University or without, is to create an organizational system that makes people accountable for both positive and negative results. With two athletics programs and two different budgets, it has been difficult to assign responsibility for the success of the overall athletics enterprise in meeting the University's goals of competitive excellence, academic strength, and gender equity. With one director, that person would be accountable to the President or her designee for meeting these significant University goals.

A majority of the members of the Task Force believes that integration of the two programs will best serve their future development through squarely assigning responsibility to the director of athletics. If such an approach is adopted, the Task Force envisions that the director of athletics will work toward integration in cooperation with a "transition team" which will develop a structure that best meets the needs of all student-athletes and the dedicated professionals who serve them. The task force strongly recommends that when the director is a male, he should be assisted in this effort by a senior level women's athletics administrator, who would have a central involvement in transition issues, the budgetary process, and general management of the athletics department. She should lead efforts to ensure consistency in policy and application, while recognizing that there may be certain differences in the needs of various groups of student-athletes. When the director is a female, she should be assisted by a senior men's athletics administrator. The current men's athletics director has indicated that if he was director of the combined department, he would pro-actively seek the views of all involved on integration issues, while undertaking a comprehensive planning process with an appropriate timetable. He concurs in the need to hire a senior women's administrator, with a vital role in both day to day management and long-range planning, as well as participation in Big 10, NCAA, NACWAA and NACDA leadership.

We believe that the organization we have proposed for intercollegiate athletics at Iowa will give us the best opportunity to achieve equity for student athletes at the University of Iowa and to achieve most of the other goals specified in this report. However, we fear that, unless special actions are taken, it is not likely to result in the maintenance at Iowa of a strong national voice for women or the continuation of Iowa's tradition of developing strong female leaders in the field of athletics. Therefore, we suggest that the director of athletics, with the help and guidance of the Board in Control of Athletics and such members of the administration staff as might be helpful, be charged with developing and implementing a plan that will achieve these goals. Because there are analogous problems for would-be minority voices and minority leaders in the field, the plan should encompass them as well. With an imaginative plan well carried out, the University of Iowa could become a model for institutions throughout this country in the development and promotion of women and minority leaders in intercollegiate athletics.

A minority of other members of the task force believe strongly that the University

should not integrate the programs, but should maintain a separate women's department and conduct a nationwide search for a new director of women's athletics.

Explanation: Three members believe that maintaining a separate women's athletic department is important for practical and symbolic reasons. They note that in 1972 more than 90% of women's programs in Division I were directed by female administrators; by 2000 the percentage has declined dramatically to 8.5%. In fact, there are more female college presidents than there are female athletic directors in Division IA institutions. Similarly, the number of women head coaches in Division I programs has declined markedly. Eighty percent of the new coaching jobs in women's athletics since 1998 have been filled by males. Where, however, the head administrator is female, the percentage of women coaches averages 51.4% (June 2000) contrasted to 44.4% where the women's program is led by males.<sup>1</sup>

Given Iowa's tradition of providing strong female leadership in athletics both locally and nationally, we should not take a step which only contributes to the further erosion of the leadership opportunities for women in American sport, but we should use this as an opportunity to reaffirm Iowa's position as a national leader in rebuilding women's leadership in athletics.

All members of the Task Force are confident that the cooperative relationships between those currently working in the athletics programs will continue, regardless of the administrative structure adopted. Ultimately, the responsibility for meeting gender equity goals, as well as other University goals, rests with the President. The athletic director must be charged to demonstrate, through regular reporting, that these goals in athletics are being met.

### **Recommendation #3**

The Task Force unanimously recommends that one of the two faculty representatives authorized to represent the University at the Big 10 Conference continue to be a woman, as has been the tradition at Iowa for many years. In addition, the Task Force encourages the Faculty Senate to appoint to the Board in Control of Athletics faculty members who are directly involved with undergraduate education and who will exercise leadership in promoting all the University's goals for its athletics program. Additionally, the Board's consultative role in the oversight of athletics should be strengthened.

### **Recommendation #4**

Finally, the Task Force unanimously recommends that, on an annual basis, the Board in Control and the President measure the progress of the athletics leadership in meeting its aspirations, especially in the area of gender equity. The Task Force identifies the following as possible benchmarks for analyzing progress.

The 1997 Gender Equity Report, and the follow-up reports of 1998 and 2000. To the extent these reports are not yet implemented, they should

be implemented.

Explanation: Much work went into the University's response to the NCAA mandated Gender Equity report and subsequent follow-up reports. Progress has been made, but equity has not been achieved. The Plan prepared for the NCAA Certification process provides a blueprint for achieving gender equity and can guide the University's actions.

The standing of Iowa's women's programs in relation to other Big Ten schools, as measured by data compiled under the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act (the "Act").

Explanation: Since Congress passed the Act in 1994, Division I universities have reported their expenditures and revenues. Data are provided on participation rates, athletic scholarships, coaching salaries, recruiting budget and operating expenses. Since annual reporting began in 1995, the University of Iowa women's programs have declined steadily toward the bottom of the Big Ten in the category of operating resources. This is unacceptable; Iowa should rank higher when measured against its Big 10 peers.<sup>5</sup>

Maintaining/increasing the six-year graduation rates of all student-athletes, both females and males.

Explanation: Student-athletes at the University of Iowa have consistently graduated at a higher rate than undergraduate students as a whole. This is not the case at many institutions. The latest NCAA report, for example, showed that 65% of all undergraduate women who entered the University in 1993-94 had graduated by the end of 1999-2000, but 79% of woman athletes did so. For the men 58% of all males who entered as freshmen graduated by the end of 1999-2000, 64% of male athletes did so.

These graduation rates must be maintained; preferably, they should be increased. Thus, the academic advising program must be maintained or increased to acknowledge the addition of two large new sports (rowing and soccer). Whatever the organization, special emphasis must be placed on adapting the academic and social services program(s) to the needs of each student-athlete.

Completion of certain facilities projects, including the remodeled women's basketball locker room, field hockey locker room, interim women's basketball offices, and construction of a boathouse.

Explanation: In order to remain competitive and to meet the goals of gender equity, certain facility projects are already underway or in the planning process. These, the Task Force believes, should be completed in a timely manner. Other facility projects, for any and all sports, should be reviewed under the budgetary process suggested above, and approved as appropriate.

## **Conclusion**

The task force concurs with President Emeritus Sandy Boyd's maxim that "people, not structures, make great institutions." If the goals of gender equity, academic integrity and

competitive excellence in all sports are to be achieved at Iowa, it will be as a result of the personal leadership by those charged with meeting the goals. It is that personal leadership, measured, as far as possible, against the proposed benchmarks, which will ensure the success for all student-athletes, in the classroom and on the field, in the future.

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<sup>1</sup> Acosta and Carpenter, June 2000, "Women's Intercollegiate Sport," The Project on Women and Social Change, Brooklyn College of the City University of New York and the Project on Women and Social Change of Smith College.

<sup>2</sup> For purposes of its discussion and report, the task force defines "Olympic Sports" as the following: baseball, swimming, diving, gymnastics, track & field, tennis, golf, field hockey, rowing, volleyball, soccer, and softball.

<sup>3</sup> In 1980-81, budgeted general fund support for women's athletic totaled \$750,000; in 1990-91 it was \$475,000. The next year, 1991-92 general fund support fell to \$257,000, increased to \$546,000 in 92-93, and fell again to \$270,000 in 93-94. Since then, such support has increased markedly, reaching \$1,925,000 in the current 2000-01 budget. The addition of rowing and soccer increased the number of women student-athletes by 34%.

<sup>4</sup> The source of this funding has been athletics "facilities income"; that is, ticket revenues earned at Kinnick Stadium and Carver Hawkeye Arena. This income source is earmarked, first, for the payment of bonded indebtedness; only after that annual obligation is discharged are funds available for allocation to the women's and men's "operating" budgets. The men's "operating" budget has grown almost exclusively through increased revenue from NCAA or Big 10 shared revenue, from television and other media revenue, corporate donations and fund-raising. For purposes of comparison the men's operating budget was \$4,036,133 in 1980-81, \$12,165,996 in 1990-91 and \$19,578,190 in 2000-01. The women's operating budget was \$911,625 in 1980-81, \$4,448,298 in 1990-91, and \$7,159,020 in 2000-01.

<sup>5</sup> The University of Iowa continues to rank favorably in several other key areas (participation opportunities, for example). The erosion in the operating budgets for individual women's sports has been a result of targeting resources toward new sports (Rowing and Soccer), while keeping other sports' budgets relatively flat. Other Big Ten schools maintained support for existing sports in addition to finding resources for new sports.

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