

Could this be the end? Examining the Impact of COVID 19 on Title IX

Courtney L. Flowers, Ph.D.

Blake Bailey

Ke'Shareon Ford

Texas Southern University, USA

Courtney.Flowers@tsu.edu

The coronavirus pandemic will inevitably change the landscape of college sports, but what impact will this have on gender equity in college sports? Specifically, when COVID 19 shut down the sporting community, many college athletic programs were forced into managing an unprecedented financial burden, which led some institutions to furlough athletic staff and cut athletic teams. Further, many college athletic programs are forecasting at least a 20% revenue reduction (Dellenger and Forde, 2020), therefore colleges are eager to cut costs amid this financial crisis. For example, it was reported, “47 NCAA Division I, II and III institutions and athletic departments have cut 90 men’s, 83 women’s programs and 3 coed sports, all together impacting approximately 2470 athletes” (Mattalk, 2020). Additionally, “Duke University reported that athletic staff will take a 2.5–10% cut based on their salary amount” (Wiseman, 2020). Coupled with this new financial burden, many colleges continue to struggle with Title IX compliance. Title IX is a federal civil rights law in the United States of America that was passed as part of the Education Amendments of 1972 which states, “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.” Historically, college athletics has used Title IX as a catalyst to support its mismanagement of funds. Hence, Title IX is typically cited when athletic administrators cut women’s sports and non-revenue sports. For example, University of New Mexico’s, athletic director Eddie Nuñez stated Title IX was a “driving force” in eliminating sports for the Lobos (Dellenger and Forde, 2020). In 2018, UNM cut men’s soccer, men’s and women’s skiing and beach volleyball. This panel discussion will discuss the current state of Title IX and gender equity in college sports. Specifically, focusing on the current state of NCAA DI women’s sport and non-revenue teams.