Town Hall Meeting
Tuesday, April 22, 2015
6:00 pm
North Hall Auditorium

Meeting Leaders: Grace Coggio, UWRF Faculty Senate Athletic Committee Chair; Roger Ternes, Athletic Director; Crystal Lanning, Associate Athletic Director

Transcription of proceedings at Town Hall Meeting

6pm Grace called the meeting to order

Thank you for joining us at this Athletics Town Hall Meeting. As you know, we’re here to discuss the impact of an anticipated 4.9 million UWRF-wide budget cut on our sport module and the future women’s golf and tennis. I am Grace Coggio, chair of the Athletic Committee of the Faculty Senate, this is Roger Ternes, UWRF Athletic Director, and this is Crystal Lanning, Associate Athletic Director. Additional members of the Athletic Committee are with us in the audience. Our Program Associate for Athletics, Jessica Curtis, will be taking the minutes for the meeting. Again, we thank you for being here and very much appreciate your participation in this process.

Let me begin by emphasizing that we value all of our athletic programs and athletes. We fully appreciate the educational value of competitive athletics for our students and are deeply frustrated that we are once again in this situation. As you know, consecutive, state mandated budget cuts, coupled with repeated tuition freezes and reduced enrollment, have taken their toll across the university. Athletics in particular has made substantial across the board reductions in recent years and is facing another one this year. Effective July 1, Athletics must reduce its budget by $100,000. In addition, it is required to make progress toward an ongoing deficit by reducing $33,000 each year for the next three years. Therefore, the total budget reduction required of Athletics by July 1 of this year is $133,000.

Although this cut is unprecedented, the goal is to minimize its impact on the student athlete experience here at UWRF. So why are golf and tennis being considered? For UWRF to remain in NCAA Division III and WIAC, we must sponsor a minimum of 6 sports for both men and women. Currently, UWRF has 6 men’s teams and 10 women’s teams. A suspension of golf and tennis addresses only 25% of the required reduction, however, and is just one of many cuts facing the athletic department.

This meeting is your opportunity to ask questions and provide input. We will begin with comments that specifically address the 8 Considerations for Suspending a Varsity Sport, which are listed on the handout we’ve provided. To ensure everyone has a chance to be fully heard, we ask that you come down to the microphone to share your comments and that you speak for no more than 5 minutes. When it is your turn to speak, please give your name first (so Jessica can write it down) – followed by the specific Consideration your comment or question addresses. After all input concerning the 8 Considerations have been addressed, we will open the forum to additional comments and concerns you might have.

I now invite you to approach the microphone if you would like to speak.
Faye Perkins – Head Softball Coach

#1: Impact to Title IX, 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 educational program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. Title nine has been a part of my whole life. When I was in middle school we had no sports for girls, they thought why do girls want to be in sports. No Title IX at that time. In 1973 title nine was enforced through the legislature and it forced more schools to have women’s sports. She was fortunate that there was softball and track and field. Fought for the right of basketball when she was a senior. Without Title IX that never would have happen. Iowa state university no athletic scholarships for women, although men had full scholarships. Now I look at where we are, look how far we have come, mainly due to Title IX.

3 prongs of Title IX, this is a law. If you are not in compliance with Title IX you can have Federal financial assistance taken away. This was put into law because people weren’t doing the right thing. Title IX is the right thing to do. First prong of Title IX is proportionality, which states provide athletic participation opportunities that are substantially proportionate to the undergraduate enrollment which is 60% women and 40% men. It is opposite when it comes to the number of student athletes. It’s not the number of teams with 6 mens and 10 women, that doesn’t matter. It is about the number of athletes and are we proportional? We are at least 15% off on proportionality, so it seems to me that we are not in compliant. Second prong of Title IX states that we demonstrate a continual expansion of athletic opportunities for the underrepresented sex. The last women’s sport we added was golf in 2002, and added men’s track and field in 2003 and just dropped women’s swimming last year. We do not have a history of continuous expansion of athletic opportunity for women. Third prong of Title IX is fully accommodate the interests and abilities of the underrepresented gender. We have women here right now that are on the golf and tennis team. There is an interest and they have the ability to play. So if we drop these sports how can we say we are in compliance with Title IX? Title IX is the law and not only that, it is the right thing to do. I see a sign here that says integrity, this is right off of our athletic website. The vision and mission of our athletic department and one of the core values is integrity. It says, “We value the development of future leaders – both in our student-athletes and our staff – by creating an environment of character and personal growth. How can we say that is who we are if we aren’t in compliance with Title IX. It’s hard to get up and speak, but this is your chance and talk about why golf and tennis are to keep. There are budget concerns, but title nine says you cannot use budget concerns for not being in compliant. That’s where administration needs to step in. We students can’t find where the money is, that’s their responsibility, but they should do it in an ethical way that’s not breaking the law.

Tennis Team

Kelsey Hochberger, Junior Tennis Student-Athlete

#8: What are the enrollment implications, including impact on the university’s strategic enrollment goals? Main reason I came to UW-River Falls was to play tennis. I would have never came to river falls if there wasn’t tennis. I also wanted to mention we have 8+ prospective athletes coming here next year. If all 8 girls come here it would cost them $14,700 to be a full-time student. If we take that times 8 $117,600 that we would bring to this campus. 4 students said they would not come here if we do not have a women’s tennis team.
Molly Deering, Freshman Tennis Student-Athlete
I love UW-River Falls s, but I came here for tennis. If we cut the tennis team she will be transferring to a different school that allows her to play. That will be about $44,000 the university will not be getting from me.

Kelly Mendel, Tennis Student-Athlete
#2: Are the facilities adequate to support a competitive program? One of the considerations is our facilities adequate enough? Yes they are, just got our courts resurfaced less than 2 years ago and we can play inside of Knowles if the weather doesn’t permit.

Makayla Newberry, Senior Tennis Student-Athlete
Member of tennis team for 4 years. Plan to come because she was recruited for tennis and softball. I would have not come to UWR if it wouldn’t have been for the coaches not contacting me. I was initially denied admission because of poor high school grades. The coach who was there about 5 years ago appealed directly to the Chancellor to allow me to start at UWRF. The Chancellor sent a personal email to me saying that I could be admitted if I got better grades in high school. Long story short, I did and I wouldn’t have come here if it weren’t for Coach Lurek or tennis. Although I am graduating and can no longer participate, I want to give other women, like me the chance to play sports in college. 4 out of the 8 tennis players (like Kelsey said) will not come if there is no tennis. If the team is cut, we will be losing roughly $32,000. I know the proposal to drop women’s tennis and golf is driven from a budget cut. So let’s look at the dollars. My calculation may be off, but I think it makes a pretty strong point. Currently 18 tennis and golf student-athletes. Let’s just say 9 live on campus and 9 off campus. Players living off campus are paying $8,300 for tuition. This equals $74,700. Players living on campus are paying $14,700, room, board and tuition for a total of $32,300. Together these totals bring in $207,000 to our campus. 2 programs, golf and tennis, cost about $31,000. That means these 2 programs bring in $176,000 for faculty salaries, building maintenance, among other things. Do you really think it makes sense to cut these two teams? On another note, I want to ask, if you cut tennis and golf, you may save $31,000 however if a Title IX lawsuit is filed, it could cost 100s of thousands of dollars. Are you willing to take that risk?

Anne Ebensperger, Sophomore Tennis Student-Athlete
#5: What are the financial implications, including reallocating resources within and outside of athletics? Main reason we are all here is because budget constraints. We wouldn’t be here if it weren’t for UWRF recent budgets cuts. I understand athletics has to cut $133,000 but I don’t think that means cutting both tennis and golf. We have dissected our budget in the last 2 years and came up with a list of potential cuts. Athletics is currently saying our budget is #13,666.75, however based on the budgets we have here (if anyone wants to see these please let us know), the posted coaches salary we know is inflated. Regardless we have found other areas that can be cut. We would be willing to cut down from our 10 month season to just our Fall season, cutting out about $1,600. Cutting coaches salary from 10 month to 5 month which would cut about $2,200. 1 step further and hired grad student to coach us. Offer credits for the coach and further reduce the cost by nearly $2,800. Some other cuts would be removing preseason meals, staying over only 1 night, and reducing overhead cost by shortening their season. If we did these potential budget cuts, we could save over $9,000. Although we are not recommending all of these cuts, but these are the areas tennis would be willing to compromise to help
with athletics financial burden. What if all 16 sports compromised their operating budget, resources we are losing aren’t be reallocated to other sports. We are just taking away opportunities.

Kelsey Johnson, Sophomore Tennis Student-Athlete

#6: Contribution to broad based program. Freshman year I participated in tennis club. It was an amazing opportunity, highly suggest people to get involved in clubs offered at the university. I was asked to join the tennis team by the coach and a current tennis player. This has changed my life. This team has offered opportunities. Athletic website stated encouraging participation by maximizing the number of variety of sport offerings for students within the athletic program. By cutting tennis they (athletic department) are directly violating this. The ratio between team sports and individual sports is 5 team women’s sports and 5 women’s individual sports. By cutting tennis and golf they remove 2 of those so 5 and 3. I have felt so fortunate to be a part of this team and university. By cutting this team you compromise everyone on this team and nothing can replace the feeling of being a part of this team.

Taylor Nordby, Sophomore Tennis Student-Athlete

Main reason I joined the tennis was how inclusive the team is. Everyone has the opportunity to play and grow into a successful student-athlete. Almost all tennis players that want to further their career in tennis are provided the opportunity here at UWRF.

Hannah Klimek, Senior Tennis Student-Athlete

#1: Impact to Title IX, 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 educational program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. According to what I understand there are 3 prongs to show Title nine. 1. Provide athletic participation opportunities that are substantially proportionate to the undergraduate enrollment. 2. Demonstrate a continual expansion of athletic opportunities for the underrepresented sex. 3. Fully accommodate the interests and abilities of the underrepresented sex. When I look at this, I don’t think we are in compliance. If we aren’t in compliance this is a direct violation Federal law. I don’t see how dropping women’s tennis and golf can be legal and ethical.

Jennifer Willis-Rivera, Communication Professor, Faculty Athletic Representative

I represent the faculty, athletes and athletic dept. I am a mom of twin girls that are athletes at RFHS. This year in their various classes one wrote a speech and one wrote persuasive papers on gender equity in sports. I did not tell them to do a paper on these topics. They have been doing this for a large portion of their lives with dance, as it is continuously seen as not a sport, and soccer. Gender has been a big thing for her, because male athletes don’t take her seriously. This is a point in time where we need to consider the right thing to do, personally as a mom I think Title IX is something we have to uphold. That being said I wanted to be incredibly clear that no matter what happens with tennis and golf, these cuts will be felt in the athletic department with cuts being cut elsewhere. I almost broke into tears with the tennis team and you putting the budget out there. I don’t think anyone wants you to go without pregame meals. Peoples jobs have been cut. People have lost their job on this campus. I’m not saying, therefore let’s cut golf and tennis. I’m not saying that at all. No matter what happens it will hurt. If athletics can’t figure this out someone in biology or English will be lose their job. I strongly believe that we need to uphold Title IX. No one should walk away thinking they have won. There is no winning in this game. It’s nothing anyone did in the athletic department, it is what they are doing at the state level. As
we are addressing these issues, please keep that in mind. I appreciate you fighting for athletics and continue to fight for this university and hope you continue to fight for what you believe.

Kate Thiesen, Women’s Basketball Team Student-Athlete

#8: What are the enrollment implications, including impact on the university’s strategic enrollment goals? I work in admissions office which is also being hit hard with budget cuts, while trying to recruit prospective students. Need to continue to support our athletes. Went to Minnesota athletics website, tried finding one in Wisconsin, but couldn’t find exact numbers. 6517 women’s participants in tennis and 4206 women’s participants in golf. Cut it in half with Minnesota and Wisconsin that’s 3,258 tennis and 2300 golf. If we cut that into thirds that want to continue their opportunity to play tennis at the collegiate level. 1787 prospective students by having women’s golf and tennis team. Breaking a lot of title nine and enrollment has been decreasing around the country. What I ask, how cutting an athletic sport and devaluing athletics going to affect enrollment? Giving tours I stress that our athletic events are free. Students love being a part of an athletic culture on campus even if they aren’t involved in athletics. Make sure to be proud you are an athlete. Let them know it is free to come. Get involved with other things on campus. 2 tennis members joined because of on campus organizations. Athletics brings in more students and has higher retention rates. Athletics brings in more students than anyone could ever realize. How will cutting 2 programs effect enrollment, there may be students that won’t even look at coming to our university if we cut these programs. Can we really risk that?

Connie Foster, Former AD and Gymnastic Coach

#6: Contribution to broad based program? – Evolution of sports since 1970. History on dropping and adding sports for UWRF. Started adding softball when I came in 1984 and then fought hard to add women’s hockey. You will see a juggling of sports in the 90s. We had to fight extremely hard to add soccer and then women’s ice hockey in 1999, exciting when they were. Dropping of baseball, women’s gymnastics and wrestling in 2002, that was extremely hard. Athletics has been losing money since 2005. This is pre 2005 when athletics had to take a really hard look at the sports module. Structural, in 1972 due to Title IX we added 9 women’s sports and the budget didn’t increase at all. Athletics can figure out how to get them to the games. How will you pay the coaches, hopefully a volunteer? I will argue that this has created a structural deficit and we haven’t been able to overcome that and never have enough money. Looking at the budgets, we are almost last in conference except in Superior because they cannot compete anymore with their numbers. 2002 dropped baseball, gymnastics is heartbreaking. Both had all-Americans. Wrestling is the strongest sport we have had. Started lobbying for the Falcon Center in 1992 to get the facility built. Under great pressure from Madison, cut sports that needed dedicated space. We were betting on getting a swimming pool, but it took so long that by the time it got approved we could no longer add the swimming pool. Athletics has paid the price. We should be held harmless! We shouldn’t be dropping 2 women’s sports and 2 individual sports at that.

Our men’s sports are bare boned, we cannot take any more from them both as they have 6 sports and need that many to compete in the conference. They have already paid too. We should be forgiven the 33000 debt. Athletics has taken a big hit already.

Grace stated, anyone up top like to come down and share your thoughts?
Kelsey Kuehnhold, Student Senate/Former Swim and Dive Student-Athlete

*Spoke about enrollment and budget.* Nothing planned on a whim, remind me of 8th consideration. I was on the swim team so I have been through all of this. My question is I get how this is an option. Why are there not any other options looked at. We went through this with swimming and enrollment. You will see enrollment decrease. You will continue to see these decreases year after year and eventually we will crumble. Athletics will not exist and you [the athletic department] will not be a part of the WIAC. Every sport will be cut as I don’t see how any other options are being considered right now. Are you allowed to respond? What are you actively doing so we don’t have to cut these teams.

Roger Ternes Response: These are just 2 of 18 considerations that have been shared with administration with athletic module and funding. We don’t disagree with anything said here. UWRF is in a financial bind. Part of dealing with a budget is making cuts in various departments, not only do we have the 4133,000 we need to find cuts for, but with the cuts HHP has been forced make and with Coach Perkins moving to chair in HHP we lost an additional 1.5 FTE staffing with coaches. There is no easy solution and we really hate considering any of these options, but as an administrator we had to share all possible options with the Chancellor and his staff. This will only get us part way there. There will be staff cuts and out of the 18 considerations, 15 are staff related. Any of you that know we don’t have a large staff; we operate very lean as it is. The majority of our teams raise a lot of money to just operate. The Commissioner of our league and I talked this morning and he has shared this with me, that UWRF is the most underfunded athletic program the WIAC. Athletics used to have camps, clinics and workshops, golf outings and raised money to have a few extra things in their programs. We are all in right now, all money raised for the program goes right back to the operating budget. We have 0 balance and no reserve to replace things. Our tennis and golf they are extremely great individuals and work extremely hard. I would argue that instead of cutting money from tennis and golf that we should be adding money to tennis and golf. We ought to be aggressive and starting more sports- both women and men and be on the offensive side instead of the defensive. Yet here we are on the defensive. I haven’t disagreed with any statements here today. We are backed into a corner and it is very difficult. We wish we didn’t have to be here last year or this year. This was coming long before I arrived in 2010 and noticed this negative funding trend in athletics. How did UWRF get $133,000 deficit. GPR money continues to decrease from the state level and enrollment continues to drop, we get approximately $100 per student in SEG fee support. Enrollment is down 800 students today as compared to 2010, that’s $80,000 off the top from enrollment being down, that’s how we ended with a deficit, it has creeped its way into our operation. Anyone that knows us we don’t do anything fancy, we don’t have our own vehicles or have special buses. Those athletic events that are close we drive vans if we can fit. We have made sacrifices over the years to make this happen. I wish we could be on the offensive instead of the defensive.

Kelsey Kuehnhold: I understand that enrollment is down. You’re going to cut these 2 teams with enrollment decreasing. I am on student senate, I know all about the budget cuts, I’ve seen them all, with enrollment being down you will see the decrease continue to happen. Cutting these two sports and previous sports, you are hurting yourself as the students may be picking other schools because of the sports we are cutting now and have previously cut. I understand where the budgets are but at the same time we need to look at other sources and go aggressively at those instead of cutting our teams.
Patti Ford, Women’s Volleyball Coach

#1: Impact to Title IX, 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 educational program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. I think it is important to look at proportionality with student athletes on campus. I understand there is a greater need for recruitment and retention of all students on campus, if we drop these two sports we are losing out on opportunities, which are valuable to the collegiate experience and for sports. We are missing out on opportunities for women to develop leadership roles and have them go out to be good alumni and give back to their university. It also impacts the existing women’s sports because someone will be saying now we don’t have our proportionality in line, how about volleyball you can carry 23 students on the roster because you have a club team on campus which is of interest. As one of our tennis players attested to that club is very different than collegiate. Collegiate opportunities are to be funded adequately by staff, I have a part-time assistant, being able to recruit and work during the summer, which my summer salary may or may not be cut. Being able to give all of our athletes the experience, men and women, the best at UWRF. I was at Faye’s retirement party this last weekend and all the women of the lives Faye touched and ultimately we all win.

Lexi Pingel, Volleyball Student-Athlete

I don’t have anything inspirational to say or any numbers to give you, but I would think there has to be other options with the tennis team willing to cut part of their budgets. If all teams could cut some of their budget or if the entire school works together to fight this and we could do something different to keep these team. Every time we face budget cuts, we can’t drop teams left and right we won’t have any left.

Molly Monahan, Volleyball Transfer Student-Athlete

I recently transferred and I’m PE Major, why I transferred. A lot of my fellow classmates are athletes. I transferred to play volleyball here, I had other options I could have gone to but since I wanted to play a sport here that is why I chose it. If you cut 2 men or women’s sports, you are taking away the opportunity for them to come to a great university.

Ryan Tibbits, Senior Journalism Major

Particularly sports journalism is what I will go into and fortunate to have been able to work for and with Falcon Athletics for the past 4 years. Proud that so many athletes are here to support fellow athletes. It’s absolutely unbelievable. #8: What are the enrollment implications, including impact on the university’s strategic enrollment goals? 15 athletes possibly more that might not come to UWRF. Lost swimming and diving athletes because of the cut last year. Telling perspective students, free opportunity to come watch Falcon athletics. The journalism department is at most games to cover the event. Students might not come here because last year you cut swimming and diving and now tennis and golf. Enrollment is going to decrease and RF will lose athletes when they continue to cut sports. This is a really scary world with all the issues with budget problems. I know we are only talking about 2 out of the 18 considerations that were suggested and with all do respect Mr. Ternes pay to play, when you talk that we are on the defensive side I think you are playing poor defense. As someone that has covered sports for 4 years and not being able to come back as alumni. For the golf and tennis team to not be able to come back as an alumni and heartbreaking. Tennis and golf won’t have the place to come back to in
20 years. It is something so special to be a Falcon athlete and I don’t want to see athletics go down this road. With tennis willing to cut their budget to continue to play the sport they love, they didn’t have to do that but they will do what it takes, so let’s not take that away from them.

**Shannon Borchardt and Megan Svir, Softball Student-Athletes**
If it weren’t for Faye Perkins I wouldn’t be here and it makes me sad there planning on cutting a women’s sports because I have met lifelong friends and sisters through sports.

Sports for a lot of us isn’t just going on the field. We learn life lessons, winning and losing and working with people. You learn so much through sports and you grow as people. Cutting these sports cuts the abilities to get life experiences that you may never get in life. I wouldn’t be who I am if it weren’t for sports. I have learned study habits, time management and so much through sports. If I would lose that opportunity I would not be the person I am today. If you cut sports you are cutting people’s lives by not giving them the ability to achieve their full potential. You won’t see their potential if you don’t give them the opportunity to play a sport they love. You aren’t just hurting them, but all that are involved.

**Mike Dietrich, Men’s Hockey**
Didn’t plan on speaking, but a lot of us wouldn’t be here if it wasn’t for the sport we played. I’m from New Jersey and I sure hadn’t heard of UWRF. To see these athletes struggle for losing their sports, it’s awful. Coming this far from home and potentially not complying with Title IX is awful. Everyone here would say, I would do everything I could to keep all sports and that brings me to my point. Mr. Ternes you said you have done everything you can for budgets. I ran a few numbers and I know for a fact since I have been here we haven’t held youth ice hockey tournaments. If each team pays $1000 to get into the tournament and say we do it 3 times a year, we would bring in about $18000 dollars after paying off workers just in 1 year on our ice. This goes the same with all other sports, our fields stay empty throughout the year unless we are using them. That’s revenue being brought in. I will do what I can to keep these sports.

**Dani Kocina, Women’s Hockey**
Raise your hand..How many of you here came to UWRF because of your sport? The majority of student-athletes raised their hand. Now, how many of you would be here if it wasn’t for your sport. A couple student-athletes raised their hand. How much college tuition would we be losing because of that? I feel every time we have a budget cut we automatically cut a sport, it’s the easy way out. Every time we cut a sport it becomes a bigger problem. I would rather try to fundraise and find other ways to get money than to continue to cut sports.

**Michele Bailey, Women’s Tennis Coach**
I don’t know who to direct this to, but I am wondering if the University or athletics, but to me I feel we are in complete violation of Title IX. What does Athletics or the University think of that? Do we feel like we are in compliance with the Federal law. I’m not sure who answers that if it’s the Chancellor or Athletics.

**Roger Ternes’ Response:** Michele I think we currently, without suspending golf and tennis are at risk of being in compliance in Title IX. By dropping or suspending those two sports this puts us more at risk with compliance. We know it, you know it, we all know it. How much risk is the university comfortable with. I don’t want to speak for who isn’t here, but that is the ultimate decision how much risk can we tolerate. That’s where we are at.
Michele’s Response: I feel no one has spoken up with the dramatic portion of the compliance and that the university is getting away with something. University is shirking in their responsibilities. What would it take to get UWRF attention, would it take a complaint with the office of civil rights, would we have to take it that far. If we filed a complaint, I’m not saying I would, but if we lost, we would lose ALL Federal dollars. If we lost we could lose millions of dollars to the university over a budget deficit of $133,000, is that a risk the university is willing to take? It scares me. I was a student. What if all scholarships, grants and financial aid got taken away for $33000 or $133,000, it just blows my mind that we are willing to take that risk.

Abbie Morris, Senior Softball Student-Athlete
I came here and didn’t plan to play softball. I was ready to be done and I decided to come out for the team. I couldn’t imagine how the tennis and softball team feel. I have told 3 people that have considered coming here and I told them how great of an experience it has been, all 3 of them came here to try out. Without the opportunity for her friends to come play they wouldn’t have chosen this school. For me to not be able to go tell friends go play golf at UWRF because it will be the best experience of your life. You won’t get any support from anyone if you don’t have all the sports together.

Faye Perkins, Head Women’s Softball Coach
I have been taking notes and summarizing key notes to leave here with. I hope you share with chancellor. Dr. Foster said athletics has given enough. They should be held harmless. They amount that we do with recruiting, retention and gpas, its $133,000 of the 1.9 million dollars. The campus has a budget around 34 million and we are talking about $133000 and I know everyone is giving something. Maybe we shouldn’t be held harmless, but we shouldn’t cut sports if that is a violation of Title IX.

We should be on the offensive side. UW-Superior, smaller university and in worse shape than us just announced they are adding mens and womens golf. How can they do it and we can’t? Finlandia, tiny private school is adding football because they know that will bring in 75-90 new students in. They know it will help with enrollment. Her sister, former President at William Penn Universityat they knew getting more people to their university adding athletics and extra curricular activities. Why can’t we be on the offensive side instead of the defensive side?

What about the alumni? When we cut wrestling, which was a hard decision. I sat down at the bar at Red Lobster and I had UWRF apparel on. He was a wrestler there and when they cut wrestling, he swore he would never give a penny back to the university. So by cutting sports, we are cutting future alumni that may be giving money back.

Other options. There has to be other options such as fundraising. There are some sports that do large fundraisers that make $40,000-$50,000 in one shot. We could do that if we put our heads together.

Is the chancellor willing to take the risk for a Title IX lawsuit. Why would we save $33000 by cutting sports when it could cost us hundreds of thousands of dollars in the lawsuit? That isn’t looking very far. I think we need to push the chancellor, he makes the final decision of what department as to give back how much money. I don’t know what the best way to do that. I wish the Chancellor was here tonight so he could have heard your voices. How do we get that across to him?
**Grace Coggio:**

I will share. With the athletic committee we will review, discuss and reflect about all the powerful recommendations and our committee makes the recommendation on whether or not Athletics should suspend these two teams and the chancellor makes the ultimate decisions. These will be shared.

**Patti Ford:** What is the timeline? **Grace Coggio Responded:** in a few weeks. **Patti Ford:** Can you speed the timeline up? **Grace Coggio Response:** I can ask, it will be the first week of May. It will be posted on the Faculty Senate website. You are welcome to email me to see when the meeting is. I have to corral everyone together for the meeting to be there.

**Grace Coggio:** Anyone else wanting to speak? We have this reserved until 7:30pm. Knowing we are going to consider these recommendations, please speak up.

**Faye Perkins, Head Women’s Softball Coach**

Right now we still have golf and tennis for next year? They have not been suspended. We still have golf and tennis. We should still continue to recruit people to come here, but Patti Ford makes a good point that people need to make a decision. Call a meeting tomorrow, I don’t know who told you to wait 2 weeks, but I don’t want to have to wait 2 weeks. We need your support and we can’t wait 2 weeks. Michele Bailey and Matt Cranston are recruiting students to come here next year. They need to know so they can tell their athletes. Don’t make these current student-athletes wait 2 weeks.

**Jennifer Willis-Rivera**

I will say one of the reasons we have been asked to wait, we had a schedule this week set up, but we knew we would have so many voices and arguments. We think it would be unfair to you that we listened to what you recommended but now we are going to make a decision. We really want to consider everyone’s arguments. We want to make the decision quickly so the students can know the decision. We want to make these decisions as quickly as possible. Please know, and I will speak for the committee that we want to make these decisions as quickly as possible while taking all of these arguments into consideration because your voices are the ones we want to hear!! I urge you to have your voices heard hear and by the chancellor. Go outside this school and have your voices heard outside of this school. Decisions being made outside of this university and decisions are being made from those people. People are reacting because of the decisions others are making outside of this university. How many would you like to take a class in here with 150 people? There will be a class every day with 150 people. I am teaching 2 of them. That’s what these budget cuts are doing. It’s hurting athletics and it’s hurting everybody.

**Raven Klein, Women’s Volleyball Student-Athlete**

Question: I was told for every time we consider cutting sports we have a meeting like this. How many times have one of these meetings been effective and that the sport wasn’t dropped? There are 7 sports on this sheet so when have our voices been heard in the past?

Grace Coggio asked that a tenure speak up to answer this question.

**Connie foster** – There have been open meetings for these sports and they were all dropped to my knowledge, none the less.
I don’t think its right to take someone’s passion from them. Tennis might not be important for everyone but for the tennis players it means the world. I played badminton and got made fun of but best times of my life.

**Lexi Pingel, Women’s Volleyball Student-Athlete**

I was here more for moral support of Raven but we just counted the rosters in respects to title nine, currently we have 185 on mens team and if we cut tennis and golf women would be down to 96. Doesn’t seem very proportionate to me, and also on passion, if you are taking away peoples passions, what kind of life lessons are you teaching. What kind of school are we to take peoples passion away from them.

**Kate Theisen, Women’s Basketball Student-Athlete**

As I already mentioned, we should get involved and contacting other people, this is outside. We are reacting to statewide cuts. Last year, the German program was going to be cut. I wrote to the Chancellor as I’m a German minor, and another reason I decided to come here was the German program and basketball. So I wrote to the Dean about my experience and how this second language has effected my overall experience. Since the chancellor won’t hear directly from us directly, so take a ½ hour out of your day to write a letter explaining your arguments and about Title IX. Getting him to hear from our perspective is huge and get involved to let them know it will effect everyone, not just those 2 teams. German program is still here if anyone was wondering.

**Hannah Pignato, Women’s Basketball Student-Athlete**

People keep saying we need to go to not just you guys, but the Chancellor. My question is, then why aren’t they hear today. We have these meetings and it shows their lack of support and them not showing up and continuing to cut our money, shows we don’t have support. For us, we take in a lot of students, we take a big chunk of the enrollment. They should have been here today and disrespectful to student athletes.

**Roger’s Response to why the Chancellor:** The chancellor is in EC at a foundation/alumni event.

**Dan Rivera, Academic Success Center**

A lot of energy and passionate about your sports. Take a step back and look at how things have been dealt with in the past. We want change so we need student movements. If the Chancellor isn’t here then maybe you need to sit outside the his door and let him hear your voice. That’s old school and sometimes that does make a difference. So think about letting the Chancellor hear your voice, sit there until he is ready. Maybe it is individually or maybe a group of you and maybe that is how you get your voice heard. That is my perspective.

**Mike Dietrich, Men’s Hockey Student-Athlete**

I know everyone keeps saying they want their voices to be heard. There are student center meetings that we can attend. Tanner Milliron and I are on SAAC together with Crystal and we have meetings like these to discuss these topics and no one goes to. Not sure if you saw that student senate was in her for about 2 seconds while the one girl spoke (Kelsey Kuehnhold). We had a meeting with them for an emergency seg fee to raise it 3% which would have helped with the budget, they didn’t think it would help. These are the meeting we need to go to to voice our opinions at in front of those that aren’t just
athletes. If you look around there are mainly just athletes here. I wanted to throw that out there to voice your opinions and go to those meetings for those that have voted us down once.

**Brian Schultz, Faculty Athletic Representative**

I wanted to address Raven Klein’s question earlier – I think 7 or 8 years ago swimming and diving had come up for suspension and was not suspended as a result. They had meeting that were held and was not suspended. The only one I am aware of. I appreciate hearing all your comments and for the fire and support for your sports and athletics on this campus. The athletes are excellent students with strong leadership skills. These people do make a difference on other people’s lives.

**Grace Coggio**- I believe in the process. I am relatively new to the University and in my 5th year here. One of the reasons our committee jumped to this meeting was to give you a voice. This is the process and venue to express yourself and hear your arguments. I will do my best to get a meeting schedule for next week.. I believe in this process and believe it can make a difference. Don’t be disheartened and think it can’t make a change through your voice. Please keep it up.

**Cindy Holbrook, Head Women’s Basketball Coach**

Question about the proportionality piece of Title IX. What I understand the caps on men’s sports have changed so the number of opportunities for men has increased, which I’m in favor of. Men’s opportunities has increased and women’s have decreased. There is a cost for every athlete on every sport. My other concern is that are other women’s sports are going to be asked to make up the numbers that we will be losing for the opportunities of women’s athletes that we may be losing. I like my team. I like the number of athletes I have on our team. We are at the right number of athletes and I don’t want to add or be asked to add to my roster so we aren’t able to give a high quality experience to those on the team. I am concern about our female athletes and the proportionality. Maybe discuss the cap of men’s sports. The combination just doesn’t make sense.

**Roger Ternes Response**: Coach you are absolutely correct, the WIAC had a cap on male roster only. Every campus in the system, and currently there are 9, compete in WIAC are having enrollment issues and all in the same boat trying to find a solution. UWRF we would like to have an additional 15-20% more students that are male non-athletes. That would ideal. So lifting that caps was a suggestion and will have minimal impact on our roster sizes and the same goes for other universities in our conference. Pick on football, we aren’t increasing budgets so if they increase numbers they would have to fit that within the current budget. We aren’t going to be able to have 150 football players when the optimal number is 100. We will be right around the 100 with a cap or not. There are spaces in a few sports with Track and Field, indoor and outdoor and cross country where we can increase the numbers in both men and women. We don’t have the roster room in volleyball, softball, hockey, soccer and basketball. I’m not in favor in Junior varsity programs. I haven’t seen where adding JV programs and now you are the star of Varsity. That rarely happens. We have club sports and intramurals that can handle those types of sports. I’m in agreement with you. Could we allow more students to try out, sure? But keeping an expanded roster, I don’t see it changing our teams. Does that answer your question?

**Cindy Holbrook**: If we are already out of line with Title IX then how are we compliant?
Roger Ternes’ Response: #1 of title nine, proportionality we are out of compliance, so that isn’t an option for us. It hasn’t been an option and never has been an option. 60% of our enrollment in any given year of females students on this campus. We would need, today, 100 female student-athletes in order to be proportionality compliant with title nine. Even if we had 15 on both tennis and golf, 55 in women’s track, we still wouldn’t have enough women competing. In my opinion, unless we add more women’s sports we will not be in compliance with the proportionality prong of Title IX. We won’t. It comes down to the other two prongs and as it was pointed out we haven’t added a women’s sport since 2002 so we don’t meet that prong. Prong 3 is the only standard in which we are holding any hope. I don’t know how we get there by dropping 2 women’s sports. That’s just the facts. We have our work cut out for us.

Lucas Hetzel, Former Swimming and Diving Student-Athlete

I have a couple questions for those in attendance. Who knew about the 8 considerations before attending this meeting? That’s where the swim and dive team were last year. We weren’t aware of the 8 considerations that they wanted us to stick with. I wanted to point that out. We didn’t have as much support as you guys do.

Question #1: last year we were out 60000 and cutting swimming and diving 44000 was saved. We seg increase of $3 and enrollment of 5100 students, athletics was 4300 in the black, so that means they made money in the process. Since you didn’t have any budget cuts to deal with, you knew you were above budget did you consider that when you cut swimming and diving.

Roger Ternes’ Response: To answer your question, we have been anticipating something like this occurring, not in terms of $100,000 because of the actions of our Governor, which may or may not be 300 million for higher education. We were anticipating these budget cuts although I’m not sure the campus knew the constraints we under when previous cuts occurred, so we can not generate enough money through GPR funding, which is state funding, seg fee funding or ticket sales. The budget is a very flexible and a moving target. That is what we were anticipating with the 100,000 budget cut in an addition to the 33,000 deficit. We had to deal with 100,000, not sure how that figure came about, but now we have 133,000 and how will we deal with the budget cuts? The administration had to think about how we are going to do this. They may take tennis and golf into consideration this, but they have 18 in total to take a look at.

Lucas Hetzel: Question #2 – I’m not sure if I heard this at a senate meeting last year or a team meeting. Heard there is a proposal that only 1 conference game was played over 250 miles away. Was that a proposal that went through?

Crystal Lanning Response: I believe what you are referring to is the former conference cost reduction plan. There used to be a number of things the conference put into place. In 2008 conference put in traveling outside of the region were part of those considerations. Over the past couple years, the conference continued to scale back some of those considerations and limit number of contests and number of overnight trips. There are a number of things that within the past couple years the conference put out those cost reduction considerations and left it up to the university to come up with their own plan. I believe that is what you are referring to.

Lucas Hetzel: as UWRF ever adopted any of those cost reduction considerations?
Crystal Lanning: We never did completely away even though the conference did. We didn’t allow overnight trips unless it was a conference match that would have been two days in a row. Our teams leave in the morning going to Whitewater, play their game and head back. I’ve been on that trip and it isn’t fun. We’ve never gone away from the plan as our budgets haven’t allowed it.

Lucas Hetzel: Question #3. Considering about the football probation. Would the Title IX effect that probation?

Crystal Lanning: NCAA infraction case is completely different entities. Office of civil rights are completely separate entities. We have gone through difference compliance with NCAA and our infraction case is actually over tomorrow. We have gone through and met difference compliance areas. I don’t see that effecting us because even though they work together they are two separate entities.

Grace Coggio: We are at the end time. I don’t want to deny anyone the right to speak. If someone wants to share please come up front.

Lexi Pingel, Women’s Volleyball Student Athlete
I have a question, what would be the best way to have a meeting with the chancellor.

Grace Coggio: I could let him know the students are requesting a meeting with him. I will do that as a result of this meeting.

Molly Schock, Assistant Women’s Volleyball Coach
I’m an alumni, 99-2003 played for the vball team. All the words and everyone said tonight and we have our alumni weekend this weekend and she is looking forward to it because of the experience. Everyone loves athletics that are here tonight and it is more than playing a sport it is life lessons that carry out. I feel for all athletes and the coaches. This impacts everyone here tonight. Looking at it, how can we be proactive, talking about SAAC meetings, how we can get more involved. Guidance on how athletes and coaches can make an impact for keeping athletics. Alumni would donate their time and we need direction on how we can go about doing this. We need some leadership of how we can go about doing this so we don’t have to continue these meetings. She was here when baseball, wrestling and gymnastics were cut and she show how it effect them. It was hard so how to become on the offensive side. We are willing to do that.

Michelle LaCasse, Women’s Softball Student-Athlete
When I was looking at a college and her aunts and uncles said it was a great experience and everyone embraces you at UWRF. The team is a family here. With golf and tennis being considered for suspension, that is an opportunity for someone to feel they aren’t family. Student athletes are my family and it’s hard to not see these people as my athletes and part of the family.

Leah Zurn, Women’s Tennis Student-Athlete
I wasn’t going to say anything because you all had great things to say. I’m thanking you guys for coming here tonight, athletic committee, but I do want you to hear us and not make a quick decision. Please think about it, because this decision is whether or not we are staying at UWRF. I ask you to think about how it will effect River Falls, and how it will affect us.
Jessie Van Wyhe, Women’s Basketball Student-Athlete
Roger we have talked about how much risk we are willing to take, but I feel it’s more about what is right and what is wrong.

We have been talking a lot about getting involved and having your voices heard. We have shared governance here which means we strive to have all voices heard with faculty and student government. Having more people engaged with it and being aware. Have people show up to meetings. There are a lot meetings that you can hear cricket’s chirping. The athletic committee want more involvement of student athletes. Getting more student engagement within our committees. Tanner Milliron and Gillian Mcdonald are representatives on the athletic committee and next year we are increasing that to 4 student athletes on the committee next year. Get involved and come to hear considerations about these issues. We hand them out at these meetings and the information is there, the information may not fall into your lap. You have to show up to hear about things and get your voice heard.

I will send an email to the chancellor for your request. I will copy 2 athletic reps., Tanner and Gillian. Talk with them and they will sit on the committee to help get the student-athletes heard. There are processes we need to take.

Tanner Milliron, Men’s Hockey Student-Athlete, SAAC President
Representative student athlete advisory committee at campus level, but also at the National level. Told about our situation about cutting tennis and golf and it is tough. Fundraising and adding youth tournaments are options, don’t sit back. The opportunity is now. The time to act is now, if you are afraid to talk at one of the meetings, come talk to me, don’t sit back. Let your voices be heard. The time to act is now.

Faye Perkins, Head Women’s Softball Coach
I think a lot of times students want to do things, but they don’t know how to do it. They need a leader to stand up. This is my challenge to you, if every one of you sends an email to Chancellor Van Galen, it doesn’t have to be some long drawn out email, short and sweet and saying we don’t think we should cut sports for the reason we said tonight. If we don’t do anything tonight and everyone leaves here without acting on this, what message is that sending to him? They will think it isn’t a big deal. What would he say if he came into work tomorrow with a bunch of emails? That will make a statement. Who here will send an email to the Chancellor tonight? Everyone raised their hand. Okay, I will follow-up with him in a few days regarding those emails.

Grace Coggio Closing
Thank you all for coming tonight. The Athletic Committee will take your input into consideration when we meet again in about 3 weeks.