

Head Coaches of Women's Collegiate Teams

**A REPORT ON SELECT NCAA
DIVISION-I MID-MAJOR
CONFERENCE MEMBER
INSTITUTIONS**

2014-2015



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Head Coaches of Women's Collegiate Teams

A REPORT ON SELECT NCAA DIVISION-I MID-MAJOR INSTITUTIONS 2014-15

This longitudinal research series, now in its third year, is a partnership between the Tucker Center for Research on Girls & Women in Sport at the University of Minnesota—the first research center of its kind in the world—and the Alliance of Women Coaches, an organization dedicated to increasing the number of women in the coaching profession.

In the first benchmark report of this longitudinal research series, *The Decline of Women Coaches in Collegiate Athletics: A Report on Select NCAA Division-I FBS Institutions, 2012-13* (LaVoi, 2013), we detailed the historical decline in the percentage of women head coaches in the 40+ years following the passage of Title IX, explained why this research and women coaches matter and how minority status in the workplace can affect individuals, provided rationale for why examining employment patterns in “big time” athletics programs is important, and reported the percentage of women in coaching positions by sport and conference. Additionally, we assigned a grade to each institution, sport, and conference based on the percentage of women head coaches of women’s teams and detailed the process and rationale for our data collection, methodology, and grading criteria. We also raised a number of important questions and highlighted missing information in the current body of knowledge that would help us answer a critical question: **What can be done to retain and increase the percentage of women who are in the coaching profession?**

Purpose

The purpose of this research series is multifaceted: 1) to document and benchmark the percentage of women coaches of women’s teams; 2) to provide evidence that will help retain and increase the percentage of women who are in the coaching profession; 3) to track the effectiveness of initiatives aimed at reversing the decline of the percentage of women in coaching; and 4) to bring awareness while providing an evidence-based starting point for a national discussion on this important issue. In this report we answer the following research question: *What percentage of women occupy head coach positions for women’s sport teams in 52 select NCAA Division I mid-major athletics programs during the 2014-15 academic year?*

Methodology

Documenting and adhering to a rigorous methodology is important for transparency, comparison to other data, and consistency in tracking and reporting over time. For a detailed account of our methodology, coding key, data collection, reliability processes, and how we determined and developed grading criteria, see the 2012-13 report (LaVoi, 2013) which can be downloaded free of charge at <http://www.TuckerCenter.org>.

Data for this report was collected from November 2014 through April 2015 by visiting each institution's athletics website and reviewing the coaching roster/staff for the 2014-15 academic year for each NCAA-sponsored and NCAA-emerging sport women's team listed. All individuals listed on the coaching roster were recorded. In some cases the number of head coaches is greater (due to co-head coaches, and inclusion of diving) or less (due to unfilled positions at the time of data collection) than the number of sports offered at a particular institution.

SAMPLE

The 2014-15 dataset included all head coaches of women's teams ($N = 472$) at 52 institutions of higher education in all geographic regions of the United States that were current members of four select NCAA Division-I mid-major conferences: Mid-American, Mountain West, Conference USA, and Sun Belt. Appendix A summarizes the distribution of schools by conference recorded for 2014-15.

GRADE CRITERIA

The scale used to assign grades is as follows: **A = 70-100%**, **B = 55-69%**, **C = 40-54%**, **D = 25-39%**, **F = 0-24%**. If rounding up the decimal resulted in moving up a grade level, the institution, sport, or conference was placed in the higher grade bracket. Institutions with the same female head coach percentage were ordered alphabetically.

Results

By Coaching Position

In the 2014-15 academic year, women coaches comprised less than half (45.6%) of all coaching positions. A smaller percentage of women coaches occupied head coaching positions (40.3%) compared to assistant (48.9%) and associate (50.0%; see Table 1) coaching positions. However, in a few of the less visible, entry-level positions—such as director of operations (75.0%) and graduate assistant (73.9%)—women occupied the majority of the positions. The only two exceptions to this trend were the positions of video coordinator (41.7%) and volunteer coaches (43.2%), in which men occupied the majority. Nonetheless, women were more likely to fill positions that were more “behind the scenes” than highly visible positions, such as athletic director. In fact, men (67.3%) were about twice as likely to be athletic directors than women (32.7%) at institutions in these four mid-major conferences.

TABLE 1. PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN COACHES AND ATHLETIC STAFF FOR WOMEN'S TEAMS

Position	Female		Male		Total
	%	n	%	n	N
Head Coach	40.3	190	59.7	282	472
[Senior] Associate Coach	50.0	36	50.0	36	72
Assistant Coach	48.9	323	51.1	337	660
<i>SUBTOTAL</i>	<i>45.6</i>	<i>549</i>	<i>54.4</i>	<i>655</i>	<i>1204</i>
Athletic Director	32.7	17	67.3	35	52
Director of Operations	75.0	57	25.0	19	76
Volunteer Coach	43.2	48	56.8	63	111
Graduate Assistant	73.9	51	26.1	18	69
Video Coordinator	41.7	5	58.3	7	12
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>47.7</i>	<i>727</i>	<i>52.3</i>	<i>797</i>	<i>1524</i>

BY SPORT

There was great variance across 22 NCAA sports in terms of percentage of female head coaches (see Tables 2 & 3). Table 2 contains grades by percentage, while Table 3 contains breakdown by sport and gender of coach. Some of the sports—such as lacrosse (100.0%), softball (76.7%), and golf (75.6%)—all of which earned an A grade, had a predominance of women head coaches, while other sports had few (if any) women head coaches. Three sports (alpine skiing, fencing, and sailing) had no female head coaches. Women were much less likely than men to hold head coaching positions in sports with co-ed teams such as swimming (32.1%), track & field (19.1%), and cross country (10.9%). More sports (n=7) earned an F, than sports (n=6) that earned an A or B grade.

TABLE 2. GRADE BY SPORT FOR PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE HEAD COACHES FOR 2014-15

Grade	Criteria	Sport
A	100-70	Lacrosse (100%), Softball (76.7%), Golf (75.6%)
B	69-55	Water Polo (66.7%), Field Hockey (57.1%), Basketball (56.3%)
C	54-40	Equestrian (50.0%), Sand Volleyball (50.0%), Volleyball (44.2%), Tennis (43.5%), Gymnastics (40.0%)
D	39-25	Bowling (33.3%), Crew/Rowing (33.3%), Rifle (33.3%), Swimming (32.1%)
F	24-0	Track (19.1%), Soccer (18.0%), Diving (17.9%), Cross Country Run (10.9%), Alpine Skiing (0.0%), Fencing (0.0%), Sailing (0.0%)

TABLE 3. HEAD COACH NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE ALPHABETICALLY BY SPORT AND GENDER FOR WOMEN'S TEAMS

Sport	Head Coaches				
	Female		Male		N
	%	n	%	n	
Alpine skiing	0.0	0	100.0	2	2
Basketball	56.3	27	43.8	21	48
Bowling	33.3	1	66.7	2	3
Crew/Rowing	33.3	1	66.7	2	3
Cross Country	10.9	5	89.1	41	46
Diving	17.9	5	82.1	23	28
Equestrian	50.0	1	50.0	1	2
Fencing	0.0	0	100.0	1	1
Field Hockey	57.1	4	42.9	3	7
Golf	75.6	31	24.4	10	41
Gymnastics	40.0	4	60.0	6	10
Lacrosse	100.0	4	0.0	0	4
Rifle	33.3	2	66.7	4	6
Sailing	0.0	0	100.0	3	3
Sand VB	50.0	4	50.0	4	8
Soccer	18.0	9	82.0	41	50
Softball	76.7	33	23.3	10	43
Swimming	32.1	9	67.9	19	28
Tennis	43.5	20	56.5	26	46
Track & Field	19.1	9	80.9	38	47
Volleyball	44.2	19	55.8	24	43
Water Polo	66.7	2	33.3	1	3
TOTAL	40.3	190	59.7	282	472

BY INSTITUTION

Based on the percentage of women head coaches, only 2 of the 52 institutions (3.8%)—Texas State (80.0%) and Bowling Green (71.4%)—received As compared to peer institutions (see Tables 4, 6, & 7). Nearly one-third of the 52 mid-major institutions (32.7%) fell within the C-grade range. Compared to the A-grade schools, more than three times as many institutions received failing grades (17.3%) and more than six times as many institutions received Ds (25.0%) for percentage of women head coaches. Colorado College and Louisiana Tech University tied for the lowest percentage of women head coaches (0.0%), followed by UL Monroe and University of Wyoming (11.1%). However, it is worth noting that Colorado College only had one D-1 women's team (women's hockey), and thus an F-grade might not be a fair representation of their coaching staff for women's teams.

TABLE 4. DISTRIBUTION OF GRADES BY INSTITUTION FOR PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN HEAD COACHES

Grade	Grade Criteria	2014-2015	
		Institutions	Institutions Receiving Grade
A	100-70	2	3.8%
B	69-55	11	21.2%
C	54-40	17	32.7%
D	39-25	13	25.0%
F	24-0	9	17.3%
TOTAL		52	100%

BY CONFERENCE

Out of the four NCAA D-I mid-major conferences, the Mid-American Conference had the highest percentage of women head coaches (47.2%), followed by Mountain West (40.0%). Both earned C grades. Conference USA (37.8%) and Sun Belt (36.5%) had the lowest percentages of women head coaches, and both earned a D. None of the four conferences had a percentage of women head coaches greater than 50.0%, and thus no conference earned an A or a B.

TABLE 5. GRADE BY CONFERENCE FOR PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN HEAD COACHES

Grade	Criteria	Conference
A	100-70	
B	69-55	
C	54-40	Mid-American (47.2%), Mountain West (40.0%)
D	39-25	Conference USA (37.8%), Sun Belt (36.5%)
F	24-0	

Conclusion

The purpose of this report was to provide an analysis of the percentage of women in coaching and administrative positions at the collegiate level, by institution, conference, and sport. Similar to prior reports on women coaches in collegiate athletics (LaVoi, 2012, 2013, 2014), this report provides further evidence for the under-representation of women coaches in collegiate athletics at the NCAA D-I mid-major conference level. These data illustrate an underrepresentation of women in coaching and administrative positions. In 2014-15 in these four mid-major conferences, female coaches occupy less than half of all head coach, assistant coach, and associate coach positions. Male coaches are afforded more opportunities to coach both male and female athletes, and men occupy the majority of athletic administrative positions. As the data demonstrate, male coaches and administrators are well-represented in collegiate athletics, especially in positions in which they are afforded more money, power,

TABLE 6. 2014-15 GRADES BY INSTITUTION FOR PERCENT OF WOMEN HEAD COACHES OF WOMEN'S TEAMS

A (70-100%)	B (55-69%)	C (40-54%)	D (25-39%)	F (0-24%)
Texas State (80.0%)	Buffalo (66.7%)	Southern Mississippi University (50.0%)	Troy (37.5%)	Marshall University (20.0%)
Bowling Green (71.4%)	Western Michigan (66.7%)	University of Texas at San Antonio (50.0%)	Eastern Michigan (33.3%)	University of North Texas (20.0%)
	Florida Atlantic University (63.6%)	Miami (50.0%)	Ohio (33.3%)	South Alabama (20.0%)
	University of Nevada-Reno (63.6%)	UT Arlington (50.0%)	Boise State (30.8%)	Colorado State (20.0%)
	Central Michigan (62.5%)	UNLV (50.0%)	Western Kentucky University (30.0%)	UL Lafayette (14.3%)
	San Diego State (61.5%)	Ball State (45.5%)	Akron (30.0%)	UL Monroe (11.1%)
	CSU-Fresno (58.3%)	University of Texas at El Paso (44.4%)	New Mexico State (27.3%)	University of Wyoming (11.1%)
	Northern Illinois (55.6%)	Toledo (44.4%)	Air Force (27.3%)	Louisiana Tech University (0.0%)
	Appalachian State (55.6%)	Georgia State (44.4%)	Middle Tennessee State University (25.0%)	Colorado College (0.0%)
	University of Alabama at Birmingham (54.5%)	University of North Carolina - Charlotte (42.9%)	Kent State (25.0%)	
	University of New Mexico (54.5%)	Rice University (42.9%)	Arkansas State (25.0%)	
		UALR (42.9%)	San Jose State University (25.0%)	
		Hawaii (42.9%)	Utah State University (25.0%)	
		Florida International University (40.0%)		
		Old Dominion University (40.0%)		
		Georgia Southern (40.0%)		
		Idaho (40.0%)		

TABLE 7. HEAD COACH NUMBER AND PERCENT HIGH TO LOW BY INSTITUTION AND GENDER

	Head Coaches			
	Female		Male	
School	%	N	%	N
Texas State	80.0	4	20.0	1
Bowling Green	71.4	5	28.6	2
Buffalo	66.7	4	33.3	2
Western Michigan	66.7	6	33.3	3
Florida Atlantic University	63.6	7	36.4	4
University of Nevada-Reno	63.6	7	36.4	4
Central Michigan	62.5	5	37.5	3
San Diego State	61.5	8	38.5	5
CSU-Fresno	58.3	7	41.7	5
Northern Illinois	55.6	5	44.4	4
Appalachian State	55.6	5	44.4	4
Alabama-Birmingham	54.5	6	45.5	5
University of New Mexico	54.5	6	45.5	5
Southern Mississippi	50.0	4	50.0	4
Texas-San Antonio	50.0	4	50.0	4
Miami	50.0	5	50.0	5
UT Arlington	50.0	3	50.0	3
UNLV	50.0	5	50.0	5
Ball State	45.5	5	54.5	6
Texas-El Paso	44.4	4	55.6	5
Toledo	44.4	4	55.6	5
Georgia State	44.4	4	55.6	5
North Carolina-Charlotte	42.9	3	57.1	4
Rice University	42.9	3	57.1	4
UALR	42.9	3	57.1	4
Hawaii	42.9	6	57.1	8
Florida International	40.0	4	60.0	6

	Head Coaches			
	Female		Male	
School	%	N	%	N
Old Dominion University	40.0	4	60.0	6
Georgia Southern	40.0	4	60.0	6
Idaho	40.0	4	60.0	6
Troy	37.5	3	62.5	5
Eastern Michigan	33.3	2	66.7	4
Ohio	33.3	3	66.7	6
Boise State	30.8	4	69.2	9
Western Kentucky	30.0	3	70.0	7
Akron	30.0	3	70.0	7
New Mexico State	27.3	3	72.7	8
Air Force	27.3	3	72.5	8
Middle Tennessee State	25.0	2	75.0	6
Kent State	25.0	3	75.0	9
Arkansas State	25.0	2	75.0	6
San Jose State University	25.0	3	75.0	9
Utah State University	25.0	2	75.0	6
Marshall University	20.0	2	80.0	8
University of North Texas	20.0	2	80.0	8
South Alabama	20.0	1	80.0	4
Colorado State	20.0	2	80.0	8
UL Lafayette	14.3	1	85.7	6
UL Monroe	11.1	1	88.9	8
University of Wyoming	11.1	1	88.9	8
Louisiana Tech University	0.0	0	100.0	8
Colorado College	0.0	0	100.0	1
Total	40.3	190	59.7	282

visibility and higher status. It is especially worth noting that men often occupy the “decision-making positions,” in which they have the primary say in the hiring process. These trends in the representation of women coaches support additional research on barriers facing women coaches and athletic administrators (see LaVoi & Dutove, 2012), with the aim of reducing these barriers.

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Appendix A

CONFERENCE COMPOSITION 2014-15

Conference USA	Mid-American/MIAC	Mountain West	Sun Belt
University of North Caroline -Charlotte	Akron	Air Force	Appalachian State
Florida International University	Ball State	Boise State	UALR
Florida Atlantic University	Bowling Green	Colorado College	Arkansas State
Louisiana Tech University	Buffalo	Colorado State	Georgia Southern
Marshall University	Central Michigan	CSU-Fresno	Georgia State
Middle Tennessee State University	Eastern Michigan	Hawaii	Idaho
University of North Texas	Kent State	University of Nevada-Reno	UL Lafayette
Old Dominion University	Miami	University of New Mexico	UL Monroe
Rice University	Northern Illinois	San Diego State	New Mexico State
Southern Mississippi University	Ohio	San Jose State University	South Alabama
University of Alabama at Birmingham	Toledo	UNLV	UT Arlington
University of Texas at El Paso	Western Michigan	Utah State University	Troy
University of Texas at San Antonio		University of Wyoming	Texas State
Western Kentucky University			

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