Athletics versus Academics: UPIKE’s Spending Priorities

The University of Pikeville competes in the Mid-South Conference (MSC) as a Division I member of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) in Region XI. Over the years, the University of Pikeville has developed a reputation for being a strong sports program in not only the Mid-South Conference, but throughout the entire NAIA (UPIKE website). Varsity sports include baseball, softball, men’s and women’s basketball, football, men’s and women’s golf, men’s and women’s bowling, men’s and women’s cross-country, volleyball, men’s and women’s soccer, men’s and women’s tennis, women’s lacrosse and co-ed cheerleading and dance.

The Delta Cost Project, an arm of the nonpartisan American Institutes for Research, looked at academic and athletic spending for 225 NCAA Division I public universities from fiscal years 2005 to 2010. While proponents of intercollegiate athletics quickly point out some of the nonfinancial benefits of having sports programs at an institution (e.g., improves name recognition and institutional prominence, as well as increases in enrollments and donations), comparisons of spending on athletics and academics raise questions about institutional priorities. (Desrochers, 2013, p. 1) Table 1 presents the report’s finding that athletic departments spent far more per athlete than institutions spent to educate the average student at these institutions in 2009-2010 and checks to see if this was also true for the University of Pikeville.

Table 1. Academic and Athletic Spending

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Median Academic Spending per Student FTE, 2010</th>
<th>Median Athletic Spending per Athlete, 2010</th>
<th>Ratio of Median Athletic Spending per Athlete to Academic Spending per FTE, 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Football Championship Subdivision (FCS)</td>
<td>$11,769</td>
<td>$36,665</td>
<td>3.12 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division 1, No Football (DI-NF)</td>
<td>$11,861</td>
<td>$39,201</td>
<td>3.31 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Pikeville</td>
<td>$14,986</td>
<td>$10,220</td>
<td>0.68 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPIKE FY 2012</td>
<td>$11,943</td>
<td>$9,147</td>
<td>0.77 : 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1 presents the spending trends for intercollegiate athletics and academics from fiscal years 2005 to 2010 in current dollars for the three groups of Football Championship Subdivision; Division 1, No Football; and the University of Pikeville.

Conclusion

It is clear from this data that the spending priority for undergraduate students at the University of Pikeville between these two areas is academics. The University spent more on academics per student than on athletics per athlete. In addition, UPIKE spent about one-fourth as much on athletics per athlete in 2010 as did the NCAA Division I institutions in the study. The most recently completed fiscal year presents decreases in spending in both areas. While part of these reductions is due to tighter fiscal management, increases in undergraduate enrollment and the number of athletes in the last three years also play a role. Full-time equivalent enrollment increased by 84% for degree-seeking students from fall 2009 to fall 2011 (640 compared with 1,175), and the number of athletes during this time doubled (271 compared with 544).

Citation of this report:
Figure 1. Academic and Athletic Spending, 2005 to 2010 (Current Dollars)

Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) Current Dollars

Division I, No Football (DI-NF) Current Dollars

University of Pikeville Current Dollars

Athletic spending per athlete
Academic spending per FTE student

Citation of this report:
Methodology

**Athletic expenses** include all athletic operating expenses (compensation for coaches and staff, game expenses, recruiting costs, and student scholarships). Athletic data are shown per athlete, with multisport athletes counted only once. Data Source: U.S. Department of Education Office of Postsecondary Education Equity in Athletics Database.

**Academic spending** reflects the full cost of education, which includes spending for instruction, student services, and shared overhead costs for academic, institutional, and operations support averaged per full-time equivalent student. Academic spending includes only direct and indirect costs related to educating students; spending related to other university activities or services (e.g., sponsored research, public service, hospitals) is excluded. The measure of academic spending used throughout this brief is commonly known as “education and related” or “E&R” spending; it captures expenditures related to the academic mission of higher education and excludes spending on the research and public service missions. E&R spending includes instruction, student services, and a pro-rata share of spending on academic support, institutional support, and operations and maintenance. Data Source: IPEDS Database

When calculating UPIKE expenses, (1) KYCOM direct costs were removed and (2) shared overhead was computed on the institution-wide degree-seeking FTE not just undergraduate, degree-seeking FTE. Data Source: UPIKE Business Office.


Citation of this report: