SUMMARY OF FINDINGS: 2005 GENDER EQUITY SURVEY
Conducted by the Sociology Graduate Research Methods Class
Department of Sociology/University of Memphis
April 2005

Statement of the Inquiry
Title IX legislation is often credited with spearheading changes in attitudes and practices related to
gender and sports in US society. Nonetheless, recent research has shown that a large percentage of
universities still violate Title IX law by awarding men the lion’s share of athletic resources and
opportunities. This survey was designed to assess student attitudes toward gender equity in collegiate
athletics. Specifically, survey questions were designed to measure respondents’ knowledge of Title IX,
support of Title IX and the equitable distribution of university resources, as well as respondents’
attitudes toward gender naming practices of collegiate sports teams.

Methodology
Our target population was undergraduate students taking Sociology classes during the Spring 2005
semester at the University of Memphis. We randomly selected 15 undergraduate Sociology courses to
survey and received 429 completed questionnaires. Using enrollment figures for the 15 classes
surveyed, we calculated a response rate of 64%. The responses were analyzed using SPSS (Statistical
Package for the Social Sciences) and a summary of select findings are presented below.

Summary of Findings
Description of Respondents:
Eighty percent of those sampled were women. Almost half identified as Black/African American, 41%
identified as white/Caucasian, 2.9% identified as Asian/Asian American, .2% as Latina/o, and 7.2% as
having mixed ethnic heritage/identity. The average age of respondents was 24 years. Sixty-four percent
of the respondents reported that they had a household income below $60,000/year. The remaining 36%
reported that they had a household income of or above $60,000/year. In terms of political orientation,
32.3% of the respondents described themselves as liberal, 47.4% as moderate, and 20.3% as
conservative. In terms of respondents’ gender beliefs, 9.3% of the respondents agreed with strict
traditional roles for women and men and 90.7% disagreed with strict gender roles for women and men.
Finally, almost 50% of the respondents participated in high school sports.

Knowledge of Title IX:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Familiar with Title IX Legislation?</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>30.8% (131)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>69.2% (295)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (426)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in the above table, the majority of respondents were not familiar with Title IX, the 1972 law
that requires that educational institutions provide equal opportunities to students regardless of sex.
However, respondents 25 years and older were more familiar with Title IX than those respondents 24
years old and younger.

Support/Opposition to Title IX:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement or disagreement with Title IX?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>31.2% (134)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>46.4% (199)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree or disagree</td>
<td>20.0% (86)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>1.2% (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>.5% (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Respondents overwhelmingly agreed with Title IX legislation. Only 1.7% of respondents disagreed with Title IX. Those respondents with liberal political orientations were more likely to agree with Title IX than those respondents with conservative political orientations. Moreover, those respondents with egalitarian views about gender relations were more likely to agree with Title IX than those respondents with more traditional beliefs about gender relations.

Equal Funding for Women’s and Men’s Sports:

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Women’s sports should receive the same amount of funding as men’s sports.</th>
<th>Women’s sports should receive the same attention as men’s sports at the University of Memphis.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>42.6% (181)</td>
<td>38% (161)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>47.3% (201)</td>
<td>53.1% (225)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>8.2% (35)</td>
<td>6.8% (29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1.9% (8)</td>
<td>2.1% (9)</td>
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As shown in the above table, the vast majority of respondents agreed that women’s sports should receive the same funding as men’s sports. However, 10.1% of respondents disagreed with equal funding for women’s and men’s sports. The findings also demonstrate that women were more likely to oppose the unequal allocation of athletic opportunities and resources than men. Over 90% of women were against the unequal allocation of athletic opportunities and resources as opposed to the 60% of men who were against the unequal allocation. We also found that those respondents with liberal political views and egalitarian gender beliefs were more likely to oppose unequal allocation of athletic opportunities and resources than respondents with conservative political views and traditional gender beliefs.

Gender Naming Practices of Collegiate Athletic Teams

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<th>Calling men’s team “The Eagles” and women’s teams “The Lady Eagles” is sexist.</th>
<th>Using “-ettes” in names of women’s sports teams trivializes the importance of women’s sports.</th>
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<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>8.9% (38)</td>
<td>10% (42)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>13.6% (58)</td>
<td>24% (101)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>58.2% (248)</td>
<td>53.2% (224)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>19.2% (82)</td>
<td>12.8% (54)</td>
</tr>
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The majority of respondents did not believe that common gender naming practices for women’s sports teams was sexist or trivializing to women’s sports. For example, only 22.5% agreed that calling a women’s sport team “The Lady Eagles” was sexist. However, older students, women respondents, and those respondents with liberal political orientations as well as those with egalitarian gender beliefs were more likely to say that using “Lady” and the suffix “-ettes” in naming women’s sports teams was sexist and trivializing of women’s sports.

Acknowledgements

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EQUITY ISSUES IN EDUCATION SURVEY

Directions: Please answer each question to the best of your ability. Mark one response for each question, unless otherwise stated.

1. Did you attend high school in the United States? __Yes __No

2. Did you participate in organized sports in high school? __Yes __No

3. Are you familiar with Title IX (Title 9) of the Educational Amendment Act of 1972? __Yes __No

Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

4. There are professions more appropriate for men and others more suitable for women.
   __ strongly agree ____ agree ____ disagree ____ strongly disagree

5. If they desire to do so, women should be allowed to participate in contact sports such as football.
   __ strongly agree ____ agree ____ disagree ____ strongly disagree

6. Relatively strict gender roles are necessary to maintain the function of society.
   __ strongly agree ____ agree ____ disagree ____ strongly disagree

7. It is much better for everyone involved if the man is the achiever outside the home and the woman takes care of domestic and family matters.
   __ strongly agree ____ agree ____ disagree ____ strongly disagree

8. In 1972, the federal government passed a law that has come to be known as Title IX (Title 9). This law requires that educational institutions, including universities, which receive federal monies, make progress towards reaching a fair balance of athletic opportunities and programs for female and male students. Overall, do you agree or disagree with Title IX?
   __ strongly agree ____ agree ____ neither agree or disagree ___ disagree ____ strongly disagree

9. The decision of some schools to meet Title IX requirements by dropping some male athletic teams so they can fund more female athletic teams is a good idea.
   ____ strongly agree ____ agree ____ disagree ____ strongly disagree

10. Women’s sports should receive the same amount of attention as men’s sports at the University of Memphis.
    __ strongly agree ____ agree ____ disagree ____ strongly disagree

11. Women’s sports should receive the same amount of funding as men’s sports.
    __ strongly agree ____ agree ____ disagree ____ strongly disagree

The survey continues on the back side. →
12. Calling men’s teams “The Eagles” and women’s teams “The Lady Eagles” is sexist.
   ___ strongly agree   ___ agree   ___ disagree   ___ strongly disagree

13. Using the suffix “ettes” in naming women’s athletic teams trivializes women athletes.
   (Example: Lionettes)
   ___ strongly agree   ___ agree   ___ disagree   ___ strongly disagree

Demographic Questions

14. What is your gender? ___ Woman ___ Man

15. In what year were you born? ________

16. What ethnicity do you consider yourself? (Please check all that apply)
   ___ Black / African descent   ___ Asian   ___ other (please specify) ______
   ___ White European descent   ___ Hispanic/Latina

17. What is the annual household income of your parents/legal guardian if you are a dependent or your personal income if you are independent?
   ___ under $ 19,999   ___ $ 20,000 to $ 39,999   ___ $ 40,000 to $ 59,999
   ___ $ 60,000 to $ 79,999   ___ $ 80,000 to $ 99,999   ___ $ 100,000 or more

18. Some people think of themselves as liberal and others think of themselves as conservative. Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself?
   ___ very liberal   ___ liberal   ___ moderate   ___ conservative   ___ very conservative

19. Did you take this survey last year? ___ Yes ___ No

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS SURVEY!