

THE KNOX STUDENT

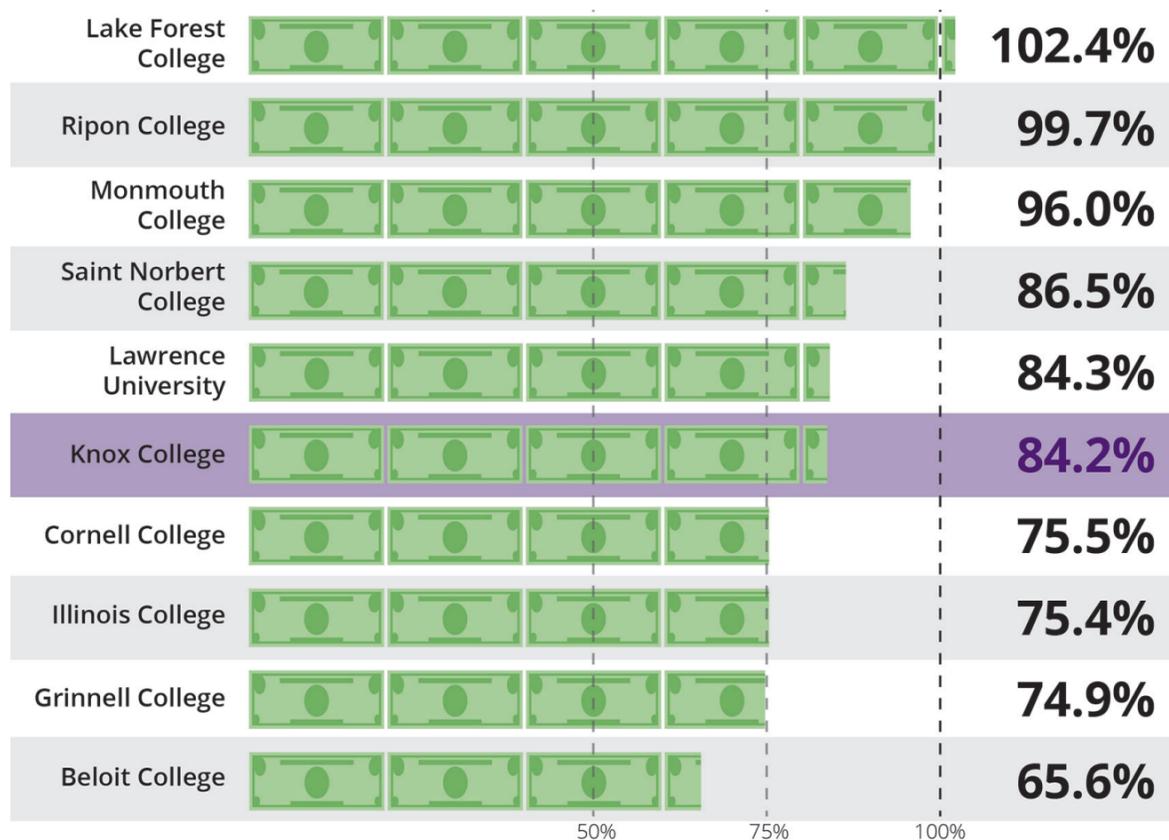
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GENDER EQUITY IN KNOX ATHLETICS

"It's an issue I would love to see talked about more, but we can hopefully put some light on it."
- Interim Co-Director of Athletics **Lexie Vernon**



Women's coaches' salaries as a percentage of men's coaches' salaries. Information from the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act. (Graphic by Michelle Dudley)

Pay gap persists in Knox athletics

Gap between women's and men's coaches attributed to differences in experience

BY JONATHAN SCHRAG
Managing Editor

In the 2015-16 school year, Knox College paid the head coaches of the women's teams on average just 84.2 percent of what the school paid the head coaches of men's teams. In that year, Knox College was found to have paid their men's head coaches an average of \$41,005 per Full Time Equivalent (FTE), while head coaches of the women's teams at Knox earned \$34,543 on average.

At the end of every Winter Term, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and the United States Department of Education release a comprehensive collection of the financial and statistical information from all existing college athletic programs called the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act (EADA).

Because of the size of the report, the information lags a year or two behind the current season. Currently, the most contemporary data available to the public through the EADA is from the 2015-16 school year.

This disparity places Knox sixth out of the 10 Midwest Conference schools in terms of head coaching salaries for women in relation to men's salaries. Lake Forest College, meanwhile, leads the conference with figures of \$57,762 for their men's head coaches and \$59,151 for their women's head coaches, bringing them to a percentage of 102.4 percent.

Interim Co-Director of Athletics **Lexie Vernon**, at Knox on a grant from the NCAA to increase the number of women pursuing careers in athletics, identified the need for progress in this area.

"We actively are trying to address this is-

sue, from the top down... It is an issue. It's an issue I would love to see talked about more, but we can hopefully put some light on it," Vernon said.

President **Teresa Amott** warns that these numbers should not prompt viewers to extract an opinion of the college's current state on this issue.

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Thoughts from the Embers:
Women's teams deserve experienced coaches
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Body dysmorphia posters taken down

Posters showing breasts and knife had been marked WAC 101 as contact information

BY FLETCHER SUMMA
Staff Writer

The political posters that senior **Ruth Holmes** placed around campus for her Printmaking and Social Change class did not quite get the reaction she hoped for. Instead of creating a dialogue, the posters she hung up were almost immediately torn down.

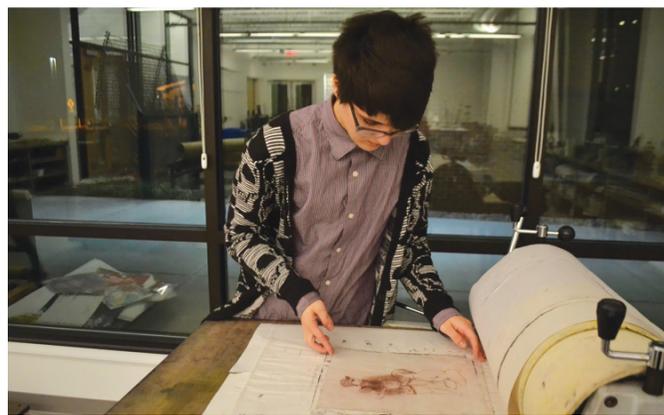
The posters depicted a pair of breasts with a bloody knife cutting under them. Holmes created the posters to show the difficulties of living with gender dysphoria, or

what she described as not feeling comfortable in one's biological body. Gender dysphoria is a major theme in Holmes' work.

"I've felt it to some extent, like I'm not sure if I feel one-hundred percent female," Holmes said. "My partner, though, is transgender and so they deal with it all the time. A lot of what they're feeling I see and I kind of absorb it and a lot of it gets reproduced in my work when I see them in so much pain."

Holmes anticipated that the graphic images might offend some people who passed them. The posters were labeled WAC 101, referring to the classroom in the Whitcomb Art Center, so that whoever had objections knew whom to contact.

SEE POSTERS, PAGE 4



Senior **Ruth Holmes** prepares a printing. Some of Holmes' printed posters were taken down from various buildings on campus. (Katy Coseglia/TKS)

NEWS

Campus looks at guidelines on speakers **PAGE 3**

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Women's soccer advances to nationals **PAGE 12**

Pay equity, from front

"[We have] a baseball coach who has over 20 years experience as head coach to a softball coach who has three years experience," Eisele said. "You look at our football coach who has seven years of head coaching experience and a volleyball coach who has three or four years of head coaching experience."

According to Eisele, the head coaches for the men's teams at Knox had an average of 11.5 years of head coaching experience at the college level, while the head coaches of the women's teams saw that number sit at 4.25 years. This massive gap in experience, Amott argues, is largely due to the fact that **Jami Isaacson**, Knox's head baseball coach, has been in his current position since before the 2000 season. Before that, Isaacson spent five seasons as the head coach of MWC-rival Illinois College's baseball program.

"The sports where we have had longevity in the coaches are men's coaches, and that's just the way it happened... I would say that that is just a random factor," Amott said.

Focusing only on the athletic programs that have separate coaches for the men's and women's teams, Amott singles out baseball, football, softball, volleyball and both the men's and women's basketball and soccer programs as the teams to focus on when analyzing the pay gap. The teams led by the same head coach for both the men's and women's sides, such as cross country or swimming and diving, do not factor into the pay gap because they have their salaries split evenly between the two teams for the report.

"Basketball, for example, we have a men's team and a women's team, men's coach and women's coach. They have parity because they've been here about the same period of time," Amott said.

According to Amott, men's basketball head coach **Kevin Walden**, hired ahead of the 2012-13 season, and women's basketball head coach **Emily Cline**, hired ahead of the 2008-09 season, earn around the same salary, even though Cline has spent four more seasons at Knox. Walden did, however, come in with

four years of head coaching experience at Warren Wilson College.

Title IX Coordinator and Student Athlete Advisory Committee advisor **Kim Schrader** highlights the men's and women's basketball coaches as well, instead focusing on the assistant coaches.

"Kevin Walden has been here less time than Emily Cline, but Kevin Walden has had the same assistant for the entirety of his time. Emily Cline has had a different assistant almost every single year she has been here," Schrader said.

The issue, as Amott and Eisele pointed out, revolves around the fact that Knox employs men's head coaches with nearly three times as much experience in the position as the women's head coaches they employ.

"We hire the best coaches that are available to us. We can't mandate that we want 10 years of experience as a head coach. We can ask for it, but that doesn't mean at the end of the day that we're going to attract that kind of experience," Eisele said.

Cline, softball head coach **Erin Rutledge** and volleyball head coach **Ashley McDonough**, the three coaches TKS reached out to for comment on this story declined the opportunity to discuss this issue.

This struggle that the Knox athletic department has had in finding and hiring experienced coaches to fill women's head coaching vacancies, has not been felt at the same rate at many of Knox's peer schools. Eisele, who worked at conference rival Lake Forest College for eight years before returning to Knox in 2006, made this point based on his experience at Lake Forest.

"The women's basketball coach has well over 20 years of head coaching experience. The men's head coach is in his second year. The women's hockey coach has more experience than the men's hockey coach does," Eisele said.

Chief Institutional Reporting Officer **Charles Clark**, who is responsible for analyzing the data and sending it to the NCAA, MWC and Department of Education, explained the way supply and demand

"It doesn't feel that good to say we don't have success and we're not going to attract successful people, but there's some truth to that."

-Title IX Coordinator and Student Athlete Advisory Committee Advisor **Kim Schrader**

plays into this problem.

"The most sought-after positions are going to be paid more," Clark said.

Though Knox continues to fail to hire experienced head coaches for the women's programs, the school pays head coaches for women's teams on the same scale according to experience as head coaches for men's teams. This decision, though it may tend to be logical and fair, seems to disregard this concept of supply and demand that Clark emphasized.

Cutting to what seems to be the core of the problem in this pay gap, Schrader points out the need for more stability in certain women's athletic programs, including softball.

"That's a program that barely has enough players to take the field ... and has been through a series, over 10 years, has probably been through eight coaches. So just in terms of attractability of the job, that's a tough position to fill..." Schrader said. "It doesn't feel that good to say we don't have success and we're not going to attract successful people, but there's some truth to that."

Using one of the most recent head coaching positions to be filled as an example, Eisele detailed the search for a new women's soccer head coach, which ultimately ended with the hiring of **Chris Haught-Thompson**.

"When we went to replace **Paul Lawrence**, we hired a less experienced coach because ... we felt that that was the best fit. It wasn't because we tried to hire the youngest and the cheapest, that's just how it worked out," Eisele said.

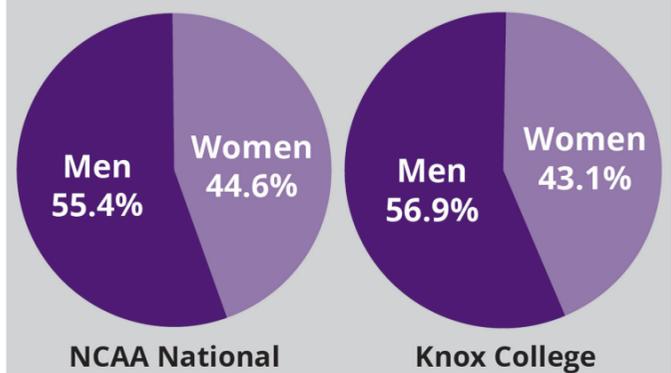
Even though Knox decided to choose a candidate with no previous head coaching experience to lead the women's soccer team, Vernon emphasized the power that experienced women's head coaches have in the market.

"Women that coach women's sports that have the experience of, for example, a men's coach that we hire here are in high demand. They pretty much get to pick where they want to work," Vernon said.

Interim Co-Director of Athletics **Scott Sunderland** recognized Knox's current place among the fellow MWC schools as a solid start.

"We are somewhere in the middle so that's good, certainly there's some improvement that needs to be made," Sunderland said.

Head Coach Salary Proportions by Gender



via NCAA Gender Equity Report 2004-2010

(Graphic by Michelle Dudley)

Sunderland sees different factors having an impact on the issue of the lack of women pursuing long-term careers in coaching or athletics.

"There's almost two different issues here: there's pay for women's sports, but then I think what Lexie is talking about is females coaching, because I think they really are two different things... The work-life balance [for women] has been not very good in the past, but I think it's improving," Sunderland said.

Sunderland, echoing Amott and Eisele, believes that Knox is on the correct path forward on this issue.

"Longevity is really what you get pay raises for, a little bit for success and stuff like that, but it's mostly just longevity... I think if we stay the course, it'll go the right direction," Sunderland said.

Amott believes that Knox is doing a good job of ensuring equity between men and women throughout the college, noting the strong cast of female leadership among the faculty. Looking at the rest of the conference, Amott stressed that the experience level of men's head coaches versus that of women's head coaches can completely explain the pay gap seen in the report.

"I'm not trying to defend the fact that women or people coaching women's teams generically make less money than men's, those are facts... I don't think that Knox's policies, procedures or mindset stands out in our conference. Instead I would say that the

disparities can be explained on the basis of seniority," Amott said.

Vernon, however, believes that because this issue of pay inequity is one that is common in society, the athletic department, in theory, is not the only place this may occur in.

"It's not just an athletics problem necessarily. I think if you went and asked our faculty they'd probably tell you that they're in a similar position," Vernon said.

Eisele, however, remained confident in the equity of the way Knox athletics compensated its head coaches for men's and women's teams during his time as Athletic Director.

"If I were in a court of law and they said, 'Chad, how would you explain this?' I wouldn't sweat it at all because I know how our coaches are paid," Eisele said.

Schrader agreed with Eisele, saying that Knox is always working hard to correct any areas of inequitable concern.

"There is not any sort of a willful intent to underpay coaches of women's teams," Schrader said. "It's unfortunate that we've had more turnover in coaches of women's teams. In the beginning there were more full time head coaches of men's teams than there were of women's teams. That inequity has been erased."

"I can tell you that as a woman, the last thing I'd do is value the women's teams less than the men's teams," Amott said.

Average Salaries 2015-2016

Men:

\$41,005

Women:

\$34,543

Average years of experience as Knox head coach:

Men's Coaches

11.5

years

Women's Coaches

4.25

years

Information from Chad Eisele. (Graphic by Michelle Dudley)