

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

Rodeo Program

**Prepared by the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources and
Department of Athletics
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House Enrolled Act 41, Section 067, 2014 Legislative Session

To the Joint Appropriations Interim Committee

The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics and the College of Agriculture visited on numerous occasions with respect to the Wyoming Legislature's request to look into the concept of moving the supervision of the UW Rodeo teams under the direction of the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics. After careful review, the challenges and financial hurdles this move could create, outweigh the possible overall gain to the University and the rodeo team members.

The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics is governed through the NCAA and the NCAA doesn't consider college Rodeo as one of the "championship" sports it oversees (i.e., rodeo is not a NCAA sponsored sport). College Rodeo is governed by the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association (NIRA) and includes Junior Colleges and four-year institutions under one umbrella. In an effort to review some of the top four-year rodeo programs we analyzed New Mexico State University, Montana State University, Idaho State University, and Cal Poly SLO. Based upon our analysis none of these schools are managed within the Department of Athletics and based upon conversations with staff at those schools, the rodeo programs have very little interaction with the department of athletics.

Another issue of concern is how men's and women's rodeo would impact the EADA (Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act) report if it was "housed" within the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics. We are required to monitor our compliance with federal guidelines very closely in an effort to meet all the regulations and laws as it relates to opportunities for men and women. It is possible that a large influx of male athletes (rodeo team members) could cause problems for UW as it may result in disproportionate financial expenditures. More specifically, since the number of male athletes in rodeo is significantly larger than female athletes this may result in increased expenditures for male athletes.

For FY 15, \$50,000 was allocated to the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics to hire staff and obtain equipment to support Sports Performance to focus on strength and conditioning and Sports Medicine to focus on injury prevention and rehabilitation as needed. Rodeo athletes are currently scheduled for strength and conditioning sessions at 7 AM on Tuesday and Thursday; and with Sports Medicine for physical therapy on Monday mornings after the weekend rodeos. Rodeo athletes may also use Sports Medicine as necessary throughout the week for other sports-related injury concerns/issues. \$10,000 of the funding has been used to hire a part-time assistant coach for the rodeo team. This person began to help supervise rodeo practice sessions in August, 2014.

The Department of Tourism funding for support of \$10,000 is being allocated to the designated male and female rodeo teams as well as top participants from the previous rodeo. Essentially the funds are being used to augment their travel allocations from the previous level of \$100 per rodeo to approximately \$200 per rodeo. Funds from the tourism program for the spring rodeo will be expended for the first time in spring of 2015. Scholarship funds are being discussed with the funding agency and will be allocated as/when appropriate.

Our recommendation is to continue the current arrangement and the financial support that goes along with it for the next biennium and we will analyze the progress of the programs at that point.