

Women in College Coaching Report Card

CALCULATION OF GRADING CRITERIA AND GRADE SCALE

Developing a report card grading scale to accurately reflect the percentage of female coaches for women's teams is a difficult—and potentially controversial—assignment given the context of female under-representation at many institutions. With careful thought we developed a defensible system.

We considered using the standard criterion-based grading scale (e.g., A = 90-100, B = 80-89, C = 70-79, D = 60-69, F ≤ 59); however, if we applied this scale to our current (or past) data sets, where ≤59% is a F, all but a handful of institutions, sports and conferences would receive a failing grade. In contrast, if the same standard grading scale were applied to the percentage of male head coaches of men's teams, none would get an F, and all would receive not only a passing grade, but an A, since 96-98% of male athletes are coached by men (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). Ultimately, we wanted a grading scale that would be taken seriously, be credible, raise awareness, reflect the dire reality of the stagnation of women coaches, and hold entities and decision makers accountable for hiring practices and trends.

Since the distribution of grades using a standard grading scale was greatly skewed, a new, modified criterion-based grading scale was developed to reflect a closer-to-normal distribution. This system allows us to assign a grade that reflects a level of achievement or standing, while also holding each institution/conference/sport to an absolute standard of excellence. Therefore, performance is assessed in comparison to peer institutions. The mean percentage of female head coaches for all schools is 40%—the midpoint of the data—which represents average achievement (i.e., a C grade). This mean was used to construct the grading system.

The scale used to assign grades is as follows: A = 70-100%, B = 55-69%, C = 40-54%, D = 25-39%, F = 0-24% of women head coaches of women's teams. If rounding up the decimal results in moving up a grade level, the institution, sport, or conference is placed in the higher grade bracket. Entities with the same female head coach percentage are ordered alphabetically.