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## The Quad

The New York Times College Sports Blog

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### The Role of Student Fees in Athletic Budgets

By [KATIE THOMAS](#)

While the article in Tuesday's New York Times about [SUNY's transition to Division I](#) noted that the four State University of New York research universities have increased their contributions to athletics in recent years, it did not examine the role that student fees play in the athletic budgets, as Amy Perko of the [Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics](#) noted in an e-mail message on Tuesday.

“At many schools like the SUNY institutions, only about 20 to 30 percent of total revenues come from sources other than student fees and institutional subsidies,” wrote Perko, who is executive director of the commission, which serves as a watchdog for college athletics. Grouping student fees and the university contribution, she wrote, “provides a much clearer picture on the reliance these institutions have on ‘allocated’ revenues versus ‘generated’ revenues.”

Perko makes a good point. When taken together, student fees and university subsidies accounted for more than half of all athletic revenues at every SUNY campus in Division I during the 2007-8 school year, according to data that the universities report to the N.C.A.A.

At Albany, 86 percent of athletic revenues came from student fees and the university subsidy combined. At Buffalo, the number was 66 percent, and at Stony Brook, it was 57 percent. Binghamton's combined student fees and direct institutional subsidy added up to just 43 percent of overall athletics revenue in 2007-8. Binghamton, however, also reported receiving \$5.5 million that year (or about 32 percent of its total athletic revenues) in indirect support — assistance which varies depending on the university but can include payment of expenses such as electricity, phone bills, and upkeep of athletic fields.

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