

THE COLLAPSE OF BADGER FOOTBALL IS NOT A FOOTBALL STORY

WITH:

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Oct. 1, 2026

5:00–6:00pm talk

6:00–7:00pm nacho bar



Pyle Center

Auditorium (1st floor)

702 Langdon St. - Madison



PRESENTED BY:



Department of Economics
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON

- **NIL did not break Badger football. It turned on the lights.** What followed was not a sudden collapse, but the exposure of a budget built for a slower world.
- **Football generates 58 percent of athletic revenue but receives just 24 percent of athletic spending** — the lowest reported share in the Big Ten.
- **That choice came from inside the department.** No statute required it. No tuition freeze caused it. No borrowing rule imposed it. Athletics allocates its own money, and it allocates it this way.
- **The same pattern appears across the university.** In the business school, the doctoral programs, and computing, Wisconsin has repeatedly struggled where money must move quickly and returns are not clearly captured. Football is the clearest symptom. It is not the disease.