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**The 2010 NCAA Division I Conference Realignment:
Analyzing the Maximizing-Satisficing
Paradox Using
Institutional Data**

**IHELG Monograph
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The 2010 NCAA Division I Conference Realignment: Analyzing the Maximizing-Satisficing Paradox Using Institutional Data

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The 2010 NCAA Division I Conference Realignment: Analyzing the Maximizing-Satisficing Paradox Using Institutional Data

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Abstract:

This paper examines the tension between profit and prestige maximizing behavior that occurs when universities change athletic conferences. The researcher compared 60 academic, demographic, and financial measures for NCAA Division I institutions and conferences that changed membership in 2010. Membership changes involve a bi-directional agreement between current conference members and newly invited institutions. This reciprocal requirement creates a maximizing-satisficing paradox which forces conferences members to sacrifice peer group prestige for financial gain or athletic success.

Keywords: athletic conference, organizational theory, rational choice, NCAA, college sports

Colleges and Universities in the United States benchmark performance and compete with institutions in associative or aspirational peer groups. Lang (2000) states that “peer comparisons can provide a basis for the rational evaluation of differences and of similarities among institutions” (p. 96). Peer groups also contribute to a positional marketplace in which prestige and success are measured relative to other institutions. Competition motivates institutional leaders towards prestige maximization, mission creep, emulation, and systemic inefficiencies. (Brewer et. al, 2002; James, 1990; Morpew & Baker, 2004; Winston, 1999, 2001).

Intercollegiate athletic conferences are logical peer groups because members are typically similar in size, control, location, historical context and institutional mission. The Ivy League, for example, is internationally synonymous with America’s oldest and most selective research institutions and less so for intercollegiate athletics. Several studies demonstrate that changing

athletic conferences, divisions, or membership associations is an effective strategy for fulfilling organizational aspirations or maximizing prestige (Cunningham & Ashley, 2008; Sweitzer, 2009; Weaver, 2010). Despite these findings, athletic conference memberships rarely change. This may be explained by the bi-directional nature of athletic conference invitations and institutional acceptances. There is little research regarding the paradox created when current athletic conference members and prospective conference members simultaneously strive for maximized prestige, profits, or both.

Background

In June of 2010, The Big Ten Athletic Conference accepted The University of Nebraska into its membership. The move catalyzed weeks of speculation and negotiations regarding conference memberships for dozens of institutions (Mandel, 2010). By December a total of nineteen NCAA Division I schools changed memberships among fifteen different athletic conferences including four of the six in the elite Bowl Championship Series (BCS) football conferences. A complete listing of the institutions involved are found in **Appendix A**.

Membership rules vary among conferences. The Big Ten, requires an application from non-members and then a “seventy percent approval from member institutions” (S. Chipman, personal communication, July 1, 2010).¹ Therefore The University of Nebraska had to express interest in joining before eight of the eleven members at that time approve the membership addition. The reciprocal nature of the agreement shows that both parties must have some rational motivation for initiating or accepting the change. These mutual motivations creates a paradox in which current conference members cannot maximize peer group prestige by inviting less

¹ Mr. Chipman explained that applications are confidential and he would not indicate how often The Big Ten receives interest from institutions seeking membership.

prestigious members. Similarly, individual institutions cannot maximize prestige by joining a less prestigious conference. Instead conferences and new members make compromises by balancing economic, athletic, and logistical considerations, with measures of academic quality, diversity and resources.

Duderstadt (2000) summarizes this tension when describing the addition of Pennsylvania State University to The Big Ten in 1990:

We [The University of Michigan] were not opposed to Penn State as an institution, but saw absolutely no reason beyond television market share that conference expansion made sense. On the plus side, Penn State was an outstanding academic institution, on par with other Big Ten schools. It was the flagship public university in its state; it was a member of the American Association of Universities... (pp. 180-181).

Purpose and research questions

During the 2010 conference realignment sportswriters described the financial and athletic benefits of changes as measured by television revenues, bowl game and championship payouts, student-athlete recruitment regions, and geographic market expansion (Mandel, 2010, Schlabach, 2010; Ford, 2010; Miller, 2010). The addition of The Universities of Utah and Colorado to the Pacific 10 (Pac-10), was cited as a “win-win” because the conference “gained the sixteenth and thirty-first largest television markets, twenty-four new football games, a conference championship and 2.5 million new potential sets of urban eyeballs.” Meanwhile, The University of Utah stood to increase its conference payout “perhaps more than tenfold” from its current \$1.3 million (Miller, 2010, ESPN.com).

Less attention was paid to non-athletic measures and whether new members were academically, demographically, or financially aligned with their new conference peers.

(Rittenberg, 2010; Daily Illini Editorial Board, 2010; Ziegler, 2010).

This paper will employ traditional institutional measures to analyze two research questions:

1. *To what extent did the schools that changed conferences increase or diminish associative prestige as measured by traditional institutional measures?*
2. *To what extent did the conferences with changing membership increase or diminish their associative prestige as measured by traditional institutional measures?*

Theoretical framework

Economic and rational choice theories

Institutional decision-makers strive for solutions that are most beneficial to their organizations. Von Neumann & Morgenstern (1944), developed a hierarchy of normative rules for making rational choices. These rules assumed that humans are rational individuals capable of prioritizing choices based on the maximum potential benefit. Scholars have acknowledged that rational choice theories are logically useful but “the most basic rules of the theory are routinely violated by decision makers” (Tversky & Kahneman, 1986).

Other studies have shown that there are limits to human rationality and perfect information particularly in a rapidly changing or complex environment. Consequently, decision-makers seek satisfactory if not purely optimal solutions. Simon (1955, 1956, 1978) called this process satisficing. Schwartz et. al (2002) explain that the satisficer seeks options that “cross the threshold for acceptability” (p. 1179).

Satisficing is common in higher education because universities are motivated by the profit maximization of the firm and the prestige maximization of the non-profit or charity. (Melguizo & Strober, 2007; Winston, 1999, 2001).

Birnbaum explains that satisficing is the only option when economically rational choices apply to several competing goals or when measurement or comparison of options is impossible (1988, p. 58).

Several studies show that colleges and universities engage in prestige-maximizing behaviors such as providing tuition discounts for academically exceptional students (Martin, 2002, 2004), increasing expenditures for research category reclassification, (Morphew & Baker, 2004) and increasing faculty salaries (Melguizo & Strober, 2007). These behaviors cost financial resources and are satisfactory, if not ideal strategies for long-term gains in prestige at the expense of short-term losses in profit.

Organizational theories

Institutions also maximize prestige by associating with or imitating highly regarded peers. This uniform upward aspiration creates homogeneity among organizations called *mimetic isomorphism*. This theory is described in many organizational studies (Brewer, Gates and Goldman, 2002; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, 1991; Geiger, 2004; Hannan & Freeman, 1977; Haveman, 1993; Oliver, 1998; van Vught, 2008).

O'Meara (2007) provides a detailed summary of prestige maximizing or "striving" behaviors in higher education. She defines striving as "the pursuit of prestige within the academic hierarchy" (p.122) and provides a list of traits that identify aspirational reach in the higher education marketplace. Although the list omits athletics, O'Meara suggests that strivers employ external relations strategies that highlight prestige maximization while also signaling that the institution is "on the move" (p. 131).

This strategy was regularly on display in the hours and days following conference membership changes as institutions publicly signaled the benefits of associating with different conference peers. Bruce Benson, President of The University of Colorado at Boulder, stated the following:

The University of Colorado is a perfect match - academically and athletically - with the Pac-10. Our achievements and aspirations match those of the universities in the conference and we look forward to a productive relationship. (University of Colorado, June 10, 2010).

Methodology

This study employs two descriptive analyses of academic, demographic, and financial indicators from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). The first analysis estimates maximizing/satisficing behaviors for institutions that switched conferences. The second analyzes the same behaviors from the conference perspective. This two-fold approach enables different thresholds for maximizing and satisficing behaviors while investigating the potential paradox implicit in the zero-sum game of a positional marketplace.

Sample

The data set includes 99 institutions in ten NCAA Division I athletic conferences. 19 of those institutions ultimately switched conferences, however, seven were excluded from this study because of multiple conference affiliations for revenue sports ².

² Several schools in the sample compete in multiple conferences but often in olympic sports that have fewer national competitors. The University of Denver, competes in five different leagues in order to accommodate lacrosse, hockey, swimming and skiing and others.

Brigham Young University (BYU) was included because it became independent in football and therefore does not increase or diminish associative prestige for more than one conference. A list of institutions in the sample are found in **Appendix B**.

Variable selection

The data set includes 60 independent variables selected due to their wide use as measures for educational quality, access, diversity, financial health, research productivity or prestige. Even if scholars reject that these measures are meaningfully tied to academic quality, student learning outcomes, or institutional prestige, the author selected variables that generally satisfied a requirement of *desirability* which motivates economically rational decision-making or mimetic isomorphism. The author further attempted to balance variables that might present mixed meanings or unclear normative directionality. For example enrollment size has been shown to be a significant indicator of institutional prestige for both research universities and liberal arts colleges (Volkwein & Sweitzer, 2006). Still, some institutions might publicize the benefits of large enrollments, while others present the benefits of smaller enrollments. To account for this, I included measures of student to faculty ratio, graduation rates, and per student resources to ensure that, “bigger” was not necessarily tied to “better”. To provide further balance, I used simple variable counts rather than a more complex or controversial weighting system to avoid undue preference for one measure over another.

Some demographic variables are representative of state populations or historical context and therefore beyond institutional control. Nevertheless, they are useful indicators of institutional diversity and undoubtedly motivate enrollment, recruitment, and retention goals. The variables used in both analyses appear in **Appendix C**.

Data analysis

Median values for scaled variables (i.e. enrollment) were calculated by athletic conference prior to the realignment and then again after the realignment. Median values were employed to minimize the effect of extreme outliers associated with highly-selective, private, quasi-private or military institutions in the sample. Medians also illustrate the binary nature of the maximizing-satisficing paradox and are therefore a better representation of the central tendency. Binary variables (i.e. AAU membership) were totaled by sum.

Individual values for institutions that switched conferences were compared to the median value of all members in the new conference. Those measuring below the median were counted as *maximizing* because they effectively enhanced associative prestige by joining a conference with more prestigious institutions. Those measuring above the median were counted as *satisficing* because for that measure, the new institution increased the prestige of everyone below the median. Ties were considered neutral and not counted as *maximizing* or *satisficing*. They were included in the data for future analysis.

Athletic conferences acted collectively when inviting new members and therefore required at least a majority of member votes³. To account for this, all institutions were placed in rank order by conference (from 1:i) with one being the most desirable rank. Ties were calculated using mean values. If the new conference member is ranked higher than a majority of the new conference members, the entire conference was counted as *satisficing* for that variable.⁴ This “majority burden” for conferences is necessary since a median value for any new member would maximize associative prestige for half of the members while diminishing it for the other half.

³ A simple 51% majority was employed to adhere to theoretical constructs even though it is not a realistic picture of actual conference membership rules.

⁴ “Higher” ranks are numerically greater in value but less prestigious in practice. All ranks were calculated in order to make “1” the most prestigious. See variable list for indicators which were reverse coded.

Totals for all three categories were counted and presented as percentages of the total variable count. This method was employed to provide a comprehensive set of institutional indicators without giving specific weighting to those indicators. The Big 12, Sunbelt and Southland conferences lost members without extending new invitations. These conferences were evaluated on directional change in median values.

Results and discussion

Results provide evidence that there is a prestige-maximizing paradox that occurs in bi-directional affiliations like athletic conference membership. During the athletic conference realignment, most institutions were able to maximize prestige by moving into new conferences, while a majority of inviting conference members accepted less prestigious institutions as an economically rational, if not ideal, outcome.

Institutional decisions

Of the eleven schools in the sample, eight (72 percent) moved into the bottom half of the new conference more frequently than they moved into the top half or the middle. Data can be found in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Percentage distributions of maximizing and satisficing outcomes by institution
n=60, i=11

Institution	New Conference	Maximized %	Satisfied %	Tied %
Boise State University	Mountain West	75.00	11.67	13.33
Brigham Young University	West Coast	53.33	33.33	13.33
University of Colorado at Boulder	Pacific-10	76.67	18.33	5.00
University of Denver	Western Athletic	30.00	63.33	6.67
California State University-Fresno	Mountain West	55.00	20.00	25.00
University of Nebraska-Lincoln	Big Ten	68.33	18.33	13.33
University of Nevada-Reno	Mountain West	31.67	38.33	30.00
University of Texas at San Antonio	Western Athletic	61.67	33.33	5.00
Texas Christian University	Big East	53.33	25.00	21.67
Texas State University-San Marcos	Western Athletic	46.67	46.67	6.67
University of Utah	Pacific-10	78.33	13.33	8.33

Note. Maximized=percentage of measures less than the new conference median. Satisfied=percentage of measures greater than the new conference median. Tied=the percentage of measures equal to the new conference median. For categorical variables (i.e. AAU membership) maximizing was counted only if the sum of an institution's new conference is greater than the sum of the old and if that institution is not counted for that variable.

Only The University of Denver (DU) satisfied for a majority of indicators (63.33%).

This is a compelling finding since DU does not support a football team and is widely known for men's hockey. DU was therefore a geographic, academic, and athletic anomaly in The Sun Belt Conference which is comprised entirely of public institutions located in the southeast or Texas. Every other institution in the Sun Belt has a football program while none have men's hockey.

Comments from DU officials suggest that a move had been desired for some time. "This is a day we all envisioned, we just didn't know when it would happen" (Squires, University of Denver). When the opportunity presented itself, The University of Denver was willing to accept an acceptable option even when an optimal one was unavailable. Paradoxically, an optimal move for DU to a more prestigious conference is highly unlikely since it is a highly-selective, medium-sized, private institution with comparatively high financial resources. As such, DU has few conference options in which a majority of schools carry greater prestige as measured by the chosen indicators.

The University of Nevada at Reno (UNR) and Texas State University-San Marcos (TSUSM) neither maximized nor satisfied, but instead had an approximately even distribution among categories. This indicates that institutions were able to make lateral conference changes that were rationally motivated by athletic success, conference payouts, recruitment or television contracts, but did little to change peer group prestige. The main difference between these universities is that The University of Nevada's effectively became the group median thirty percent of the time while TSUSM had an equal number of measurements above the median as it did below the median.

The University of Utah maximized most effectively by joining the Pacific 10 Conference. 78.33 percent of measures were below the median value for the new conference while only 13.33 percent were above. The University of Colorado also maximized prestige by joining the Pac-10 but to a lesser degree than Utah.

The University of Utah's good fortunes may be explained by the chronology of events during The Pacific 10 expansion in June, 2010. After securing The University of Colorado, The Pac-10 courted The University of Texas at Austin (UT). UT is the most prestigious university in the Big 12 Conference academically (it ranks either first or second in the conference on 38 of the indicators) and in athletics (it has earned the most national championships in the conference). The possibility of simultaneously maximizing profit and prestige was so attractive that The Pac-10 commissioner, Larry Scott, invited four additional universities with political or athletic ties to The University of Texas (Smith, 2010)⁵. Ironically, those invitations may have diminished or mitigated the prestige gained by including UT while minimizing conference distribution payments.

⁵ Texas Tech University, Texas A&M University, The University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University were all invited into the Pac-10.

Ultimately Texas declined the invitation leaving room in the Pac-10 for an additional member. At this point, the conference invited Utah thereby greatly improving Utah's peer group affiliation.

Conference Results

Athletic conferences were less likely to maximize prestige by inviting new members. When calculating new members individually, only two invitations (The University of Nevada and The University of Denver) enhanced the prestige of the new conference for more than half of the indicators.

Conversely, the invitations of the University of Nebraska, Boise State University and The University of Utah (by The Big Ten, The Mountain West, and The Pac-10) failed to maximize prestige for a majority of conference members. The Big Ten's invitation of Nebraska had the highest percentage (66.67) of satisfied measures and represents the most apparent willingness to compromise conference academic prestige for athletic improvement. Results for conferences are found in **Table 2**.

**Table 2: Percentage distributions of maximizing and satisficing outcomes by conferences with new members
n=60, i=11**

New Conference (New Member)	Majority Rank	Maximized % (x < maj. rank)	Satisfied % (x > maj. rank)	Neutral/Tied % (x = maj. rank)
Big East (TCU)	10	45.00	45.00	10.00
Big Ten (Nebraska)	7	31.67	66.67	1.67
Mountain West (Boise State)	6	23.33	55.00	21.67
Mountain West (Cal. St. Fresno)	6	38.33	41.67	20.00
Mountain West (Nevada)	6	63.33	26.67	10.00
Pacific-10 (Colorado)	7	43.33	35.00	21.67
Pacific-10 (Utah)	7	21.67	60.00	18.33
West Coast (BYU)	6	41.67	46.67	11.67
Western Athletic (Denver)	5	63.33	28.33	8.33
Western Athletic (Texas San Antonio)	5	40.00	50.00	10.00
Western Athletic (Texas St. San Marcos)	5	48.33	30.00	21.67

Note. Majority rank=(i+1)/2 where i=the number of teams in the new conference. This measure was designed to represent at least a 51% majority. All decimal values were rounded up to the next whole number. Variables were ranked in order of by new conference membership. Maximized=percentage of ranked measures less than the majority rank. Satisfied=percentage of measures greater than the majority rank. Tied=the percentage of measures equal to the majority rank. For categorical variables (i.e. AAU membership) maximizing was counted if the sum for conference is greater after the addition of the new member.

This analysis is useful for understanding each invitation independently, but is biased in its ability to explain the behaviors of conferences that added multiple members. To minimize this bias, I produced average values for the total number of indicators for each category divided by the number of additional teams. When accounting for multiple institutions, some of the satisficing effects of individual invitations are minimized or disappear. The Pac-10, for example, buffered weaker indicators from University of Utah, with stronger ones from The University of Colorado. Aggregated results are found in **Table 3**.

**Table 3: Mean percentage distributions of maximizing and satisficing outcomes by conferences with new members
n=60, i=6**

New Conference	Majority Rank (i+1)/2	New Schools	Maximized % (x< maj. rank)	Satisfied % (x> maj. rank)	Neutral/Tied % (x=maj. rank)
Big East	10	1	45.00	45.00	10.00
Big Ten	7	1	31.67	66.67	1.67
Mountain West	6	3	41.67	41.11	17.22
Pacific-10	7	2	32.50	47.50	20.00
West Coast	6	1	41.67	46.67	11.67
Western Athletic	5	3	50.56	36.11	13.33

Note. Majority rank=(i/2)+1 where i=the number of teams in the new conference. This measure was designed to represent at least a 51% majority. All decimal values were rounded up to the next whole number. Variables were ranked in order of by new conference membership. Maximized=percentage of ranked measures less than the majority rank. Satisfied=percentage of measures greater than the majority rank. Tied=the percentage of measures equal to the majority rank. For categorical variables (i.e. AAU membership) maximizing was counted if the sum for conference is greater after the addition of the new member.

The Western Athletic Conference (WAC) maximized for more than fifty percent of the indicators (50.56) indicating that the benefits of attracting The University of Denver, were minimized by the addition of two additional schools. Nevertheless, The WAC raised its prestige more than other conferences with new members.

Conferences without new members

During the realignment, several athletic conferences responded to member departures by initiating invitations of their own. This catalyzed a chain reaction as the wealthier, more prestigious and more successful athletic conferences invited new institutions into their membership.

This paper applies theories to understand conference and institutional *actions* but there are also interesting effects from *inaction*. Three conferences in the sample that members yet extended no additional invitations.⁶ Each of these conferences showed decreased values (medians or sums) with greater frequency than increased ones.

⁶ Between the data analysis and submission several other conference changes have been announced but none that would qualify for inclusion in this study.

The Sunbelt Conference was the only conference with a majority (53.33 percent) of decreased indicators, attributed to the loss of The University of Denver. Complete results can be found in

Table 4.

*Table 4: Percentage distributions of changes in median values for conferences without new members
n=60, j=3*

New Conference	Members Lost	Indicators Increased %	Indicators Decreased %	Indicators Equal
Big Twelve	2	13.33	23.33	63.33
Southland	2	23.33	43.33	33.33
Sunbelt	1	28.33	53.33	18.33

The Big 12 provides a compelling case study. In June, 2010 sportswriters had all but predicted the end of the Big 12 when two of its members were successfully courted by other conferences and five others received invitations. Instead, the conference maintained its median value for 63.33 percent of the values in this study while also increasing each institution’s revenue share.

Although further theoretical development and inquiry are necessary, there is cursory evidence that retaining the most prestigious institutions is an effective strategy for increasing prestige, particularly in times of environmental stress or competition. This argument is further supported by the lack of activity from the most prestigious academic conference (The Ivy League) and from the wealthiest and most successful athletic conference (The Southeastern Conference). For institutions in these conferences, there is a ceiling on upward aspiration and no reason to share peer-group affiliation with additional members.

Limitations

This study largely discounts the variable of time and is presented entirely as a multiple *post hoc* analyses of the events. This is problematic because decision-making processes were based on limited information available to decision makers at multiple times rather than the two (before and after) included in this study.

For Example, The University of Colorado, joined the Pac-10 as the eleventh member but its membership will not commence until 2011. Therefore it was not able to vote on whether to invite The University of Utah. To account for this, all median values and conference ranks would have to be calculated based on the number of schools that were in the conference at the exact time of invitation while also assuming that decision-makers would make calculations based on measures of future members.

Methodologically, I believe that variable count provides a robust and useful (albeit rudimentary) explanation of the data. Nevertheless, the current methodology only accounts for three possible outcomes without describing the intensity of specific outcomes. An expanded version of this paper will involve a more detailed analysis of variation between conferences and among conference members. This type of analysis will also provide a more precise instrument for measuring maximizing and satisficing choices. I also plan to analyze changes in conference rank orders to provide a greater understanding of changes in “prestige distance” between the old conference and the new one.

Future directions

The NCAA Division I conference realignment was a natural experiment that can be analyzed through a number of theoretical lenses. This paper utilized organizational and economic theories to understand the conference changes yet excluded other perspectives.

Unfortunately, the events are recent and therefore scholarly literature is scarce. The popular media shed light on several compelling perspectives regarding institutional culture, religious affiliation, historical context and political connections which might have motivated institutional decisions as much as financial gains, athletic success or potential gains in peer group prestige. A qualitative or mixed-methods study will help explain motivations that are not quantifiable or prove difficult to measure.

The effects of the realignment will continue to be seen until all of the institutions are fully integrated into their new conferences. Meanwhile, this presents a remarkable opportunity to investigate the longitudinal benefits that switching conferences has on institutional advancement measures like alumni relations, fund raising, corporate giving, research productivity, admissions recruitment, or internationalization. Since most institutions were able to maximize peer group prestige, future studies should examine the ways in which those institutions capitalize on new peer associations, geographic reach, and athletic performance.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: Summary of institutions that switched conferences between June 2010 and March, 2011

Institution	Former Conference	New Conference	Date Announced
The University of Colorado	Big 12	Pac-10	June 10, 2010
Boise State University	Western Athletic	Mountain West	June 11, 2010
University of Nebraska-Lincoln	Big 12	Big Ten	June 11, 2010
University of Utah	Mountain West	Pac-10	June 17, 2010
California State University-Fresno	Western Athletic	Mountain West	August 18, 2010
University of Nevada-Reno	Western Athletic	Mountain West	August 18, 2010
Brigham Young University	Mountain West	West Coast Conference (Indep. football)	August 31, 2010
California Polytechnic State University	Big West (Great West for football)	Big West (Big Sky for football)	September 7, 2010
University of California-Davis	Big West (Great West for football)	Big West (Big Sky for football)	September 7, 2010
North Dakota Fighting Sioux	Great West	Big Sky	November 1, 2010
Southern Utah Thunderbirds	The Summit (Great West for football)	Big Sky (all sports)	November 1, 2010
University of Texas-San Antonio	Southland	Western Athletic	November 10, 2010
Texas State University-San Marcos	Southland	Western Athletic	November 10, 2010
University of Denver	Sun Belt (non-football)	Western Athletic (non-football)	November 10, 2010
Mercer University	Atlantic Sun (non-football)	Atlantic Sun (Pioneer for football)	November 20, 2010
University of Rhode Island	Atlantic 10 (CAA for football)	Atlantic 10 (NEC for football)	November 22, 2010
Texas Christian University	Mountain West	Big East	November 29, 2010
University of Hawaii-Manoa	Western Athletic	Big West (Mountain West for football)	December 10, 2010
University of Nebraska-Omaha	MIAA (Division II), WCHA (hockey)	The Summit, WCHA (hockey)	March 12, 2011
Stetson University	Atlantic Sun (non-football)	Atlantic Sun (Pioneer for football)	March 14, 2011
University of South Dakota	Great West	The Summit (MVFC for football)	April 15, 2010; November 3, 2010

Source: Wikipedia.org. Note. Institutions in bold were included in this study. Institutions were excluded due to multiple conference affiliations for revenue sports. Data analysis for this paper completed in March, 2011 prior to the new announcements from UNO and Stetson.

Appendix B: List of institutions included in the study
i=99

INSTITUTION	IPEDS_ID	Old Conference	New Conference
Arizona State University	104151	Pacific 10	Pacific 10
Arkansas State University-Main Campus	106458	Sun Belt	Sun Belt
Baylor University	223232	Big 12	Big 12
Boise State University	142115	Western Athletic	Mountain West
Brigham Young University	230038	Mountain West	West Coast
California State University-Fresno	110556	Western Athletic	Mountain West
Colorado State University	126818	Mountain West	Mountain West
DePaul University	144740	Big East	Big East
Florida Atlantic University	133669	Sun Belt	Sun Belt
Florida International University	133951	Sun Belt	Sun Belt
Georgetown University	131496	Big East	Big East
Gonzaga University	235316	West Coast	West Coast
Indiana University-Bloomington	151351	Big Ten	Big Ten
Iowa State University	153603	Big 12	Big 12
Kansas State University	155399	Big 12	Big 12
Lamar University	226091	Southland	Southland
Louisiana Tech University	159647	Western Athletic	Western Athletic
Loyola Marymount University	117946	West Coast	West Coast
Marquette University	239105	Big East	Big East
McNeese State University	159717	Southland	Southland
Michigan State University	171100	Big Ten	Big Ten
Middle Tennessee State University	220978	Sun Belt	Sun Belt
New Mexico State University-Main Campus	188030	Western Athletic	Western Athletic
Nicholls State University	159966	Southland	Southland
Northwestern State University of Louisiana	160038	Southland	Southland
Northwestern University	147767	Big Ten	Big Ten
Ohio State University-Main Campus	204796	Big Ten	Big Ten
Oklahoma State University-Main Campus	207388	Big 12	Big 12
Oregon State University	209542	Pacific 10	Pacific 10
Pennsylvania State University-Main Campus	214777	Big Ten	Big Ten
Pepperdine University	121150	West Coast	West Coast
Providence College	217402	Big East	Big East
Purdue University-Main Campus	243780	Big Ten	Big Ten
Rutgers University-New Brunswick	186380	Big East	Big East
Saint Mary's College of California	123554	West Coast	West Coast
Sam Houston State University	227881	Southland	Southland
San Diego State University	122409	Mountain West	Mountain West
San Jose State University	122755	Western Athletic	Western Athletic
Santa Clara University	122931	West Coast	West Coast

INSTITUTION	IPEDS_ID	Old Conference	New Conference
Southeastern Louisiana University	160612	Southland	Southland
St. John's University-New York	195809	Big East	Big East
Stanford University	243744	Pacific 10	Pacific 10
Stephen F Austin State University	228431	Southland	Southland
Syracuse University	196413	Big East	Big East
Texas A & M University	228723	Big 12	Big 12
Texas A & M University-Corpus Christi	224147	Southland	Southland
Texas Christian University	228875	Mountain West	Big East
Texas State University-San Marcos	228459	Southland	Western Athletic
Texas Tech University	229115	Big 12	Big 12
Troy University	102368	Sun Belt	Sun Belt
United States Air Force Academy	128328	Mountain West	Mountain West
University of Arizona	104179	Pacific 10	Pacific 10
University of Arkansas at Little Rock	106245	Sun Belt	Sun Belt
University of California-Berkeley	110635	Pacific 10	Pacific 10
University of California-Los Angeles	110662	Pacific 10	Pacific 10
University of Central Arkansas	106704	Southland	Southland
University of Cincinnati-Main Campus	201885	Big East	Big East
University of Colorado at Boulder	126614	Big 12	Pacific 10
University of Connecticut	129020	Big East	Big East
University of Denver	127060	Sun Belt	Western Athletic
University of Hawaii at Manoa	141574	Western Athletic	BIGWEST
University of Idaho	142285	Western Athletic	Western Athletic
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	145637	Big Ten	Big Ten
University of Iowa	153658	Big Ten	Big Ten
University of Kansas	155317	Big 12	Big 12
University of Louisiana at Lafayette	160658	Sun Belt	Sun Belt
University of Louisiana Monroe	159993	Sun Belt	Sun Belt
University of Louisville	157289	Big East	Big East
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor	170976	Big Ten	Big Ten
University of Minnesota-Twin Cities	174066	Big Ten	Big Ten
University of Missouri-Columbia	178396	Big 12	Big 12
University of Nebraska-Lincoln	181464	Big 12	Big Ten
University of Nevada-Las Vegas	182281	Mountain West	Mountain West
University of Nevada-Reno	182290	Western Athletic	Mountain West
University of New Mexico-Main Campus	187985	Mountain West	Mountain West
University of North Texas	227216	Sun Belt	Sun Belt
University of Notre Dame	152080	Big East	Big East
University of Oklahoma Norman Campus	207500	Big 12	Big 12
University of Oregon	209551	Pacific 10	Pacific 10
University of Pittsburgh-Pittsburgh Campus	215293	Big East	Big East

INSTITUTION	IPEDS_ID	Old Conference	New Conference
University of Portland	209825	West Coast	West Coast
University of San Diego	122436	West Coast	West Coast
University of San Francisco	122612	West Coast	West Coast
University of South Alabama	102094	Sun Belt	Sun Belt
University of South Florida-Main Campus	137351	Big East	Big East
University of Southern California	123961	Pacific 10	Pacific 10
University of Texas at Arlington	228769	Southland	Southland
University of Texas at Austin	228778	Big 12	Big 12
University of Texas at San Antonio	229027	Southland	Western Athletic
University of Utah	230764	Mountain West	Pacific 10
University of Washington-Seattle Campus	236948	Pacific 10	Pacific 10
University of Wisconsin-Madison	240444	Big Ten	Big Ten
University of Wyoming	240727	Mountain West	Mountain West
Utah State University	230728	Western Athletic	Western Athletic
Villanova University	216597	Big East	Big East
Washington State University	236939	Pacific 10	Pacific 10
West Virginia University	238032	Big East	Big East
Western Kentucky University	157951	Sun Belt	Sun Belt

Appendix C. List of variables included in the study

Variable Name	Variable Description
<i>INSTITUTION</i>	Institution Name
<i>IPEDSID</i>	IPEDS ID
<i>OLDCONF</i>	Athletic Conference Prior to 2010
<i>NEWCONF</i>	Athletic Conference After 2010
<i>SWITCHED</i>	Institution Switched (YES, NO)
<i>LANDGRANT *</i>	Land Grant (YES, NO)
<i>PRIVATE *</i>	Private Institution (YES, NO)
<i>VERYHIGHRESEARCH *</i>	Carnegie Classification of Very High Research (YES, NO)
<i>AAU *</i>	AAU Member (YES, NO)
<i>FOUNDING ‡</i>	Founding Year
<i>ADMIT_RATE_2008 ‡</i>	Admit Rate, Fall 2008 (First-Time, Degree Seeking)
<i>ACT25TH_2008 †</i>	25th Percentile ACT Score (Composite) FTFT Applicant, 2008
<i>ACT75TH_2008 †</i>	75th Percentile ACT Score (Composite) FTFT Applicant, 2008
<i>SAT_CRM_25 †</i>	25th Percentile SAT Score (CR+M) FTFT Applicant, 2008
<i>SAT_CRM_75 †</i>	75th Percentile SAT Score (CR+M) FTFT Applicant, 2008
<i>CHRT_PCT_ENTERCLASS_2008</i>	Percentage of Total Enrollment Represented in FTFT, Fall 2008 Cohort
<i>ENDOW_FTE_2008</i>	Endowment Value per FTE, 2008
<i>ENDOWMENT_2007</i>	Endowment Market Value, End of Fiscal Year 2008
<i>EXPENSES_ACAD_SUPP_FTE_2008</i>	Academic Support Expenses per FTE
<i>EXPENSES_PUB_SERV_FTE_2008</i>	Public Service Expenses per FTE
<i>EXPENSES_RESEARCH_FTE_2008</i>	Research Expenses per FTE
<i>EXPENSES_STUSERV_FTE_2008</i>	Student Support Expenses per FTE
<i>EXPENSES_CORE_OTHER_FTE_2008</i>	Other Expenses per FTE
<i>EXPENSES_INSTRUC_FTE_2008</i>	Instructional Expenses per FTE
<i>EXPENSES_INSUPP_FTE_2008</i>	Institutional Support Expenses per FTE
<i>AVG_SAL_STAFF_FTE9MONTH_2008</i>	Average Salary Full Time Instructional Staff
<i>FT_ENROLL_2008</i>	Full Time Enrollment, Fall 2008
<i>FTE_ENROLL_2008</i>	FTE Enrollment, Fall 2008
<i>FT_INSSTAFF_10MONTH_2008</i>	Full Time Instructional Staff 10 Month Equivalent Contracts
<i>FT_INSSTAFF_9MONTHFTE_2008</i>	Full Time Instructional Staff 9 Month Equivalent Contracts
<i>FT_RETENTION_2008</i>	Retention Rate, FTFT 2008
<i>FTFT_DGREE_PCNT_COHORT_2008</i>	Fall 2008 Graduation Rate Cohort as Percentage of Entering Class
<i>FTFT_UGRD_DGREE_SEEK_COHORT_2008</i>	Fall 2008 New Class Size

All data is from IPEDS Universe, 2008 survey unless otherwise noted.

† Institutions reporting data from one exam were translated using ACT/SAT concordance tables

‡ Reverse coded since lower values convey maximum prestige

* Binary variable calculated as sums for data analysis

Appendix C. List of variables included in the study (Continued)

Variable Name	Variable Description
<i>GRAD_RATE_ASIAN_2007</i>	Graduation Rates within 150% of normal time in 2008--Asian/Pacific Islander
<i>GRAD_RATE_BACH_4YR_2008</i>	Graduation Rate within 100% of Normal Time, 2008
<i>GRAD_RATE_BACH_5YR_2008</i>	Graduation Rate within 125% of Normal Time, 2008
<i>GRAD_RATE_BACH_6YR_2008</i>	Graduation Rate within 150% of Normal Time, 2008
<i>GRAD_RATE_BLACK_2008</i>	Graduation Rates within 150% of normal time in 2008--Black
<i>GRAD_RATE_COHORT_2008</i>	Graduation Rates within 150% of normal time in 2008--Total
<i>GRAD_RATE_HISPANIC_2008</i>	Graduation Rates within 150% of normal time in 2008--Hispanic/Latino
<i>GRAD_RATE_WHITE_2008</i>	Graduation Rates within 150% of normal time in 2008--White, non-Hispanic
<i>PCT_FTFT_FINAID_2007</i>	Percentage of FTFT Students Receiving Financial Aid
<i>AVG_FTFT_GRANT_2008</i>	Average Grant Amount (Federal, State, Local, Institutional)
<i>PCT_FTFT_GRANTAID_2007</i>	Percentage of FTFT Students Receiving Grants
<i>PCT_FTFT_PELL_2007</i>	Percentage of FTFT Receiving Pell Grant
<i>PRICE_INSTATE_ONCAMPUS_2008</i>	Cost of Attendance for Resident Student Living on Campus
<i>PRICE_OUTSTATE_ONCAMPUS_2008</i>	Cost of Attendance for Non-Resident Student Living on Campus
<i>REVENUE_GOV_GRANTS_FTE_2008</i>	Government Grants per FTE
<i>REVENUE_STATE_FTE_2008</i>	State Appropriations per FTE
<i>REVENUE_TUITION_FTE_2008</i>	Tuition and Fees per FTE
<i>REVENUE_PCT_TUITION †</i>	Percentage of total revenue from Tuition and Fees
<i>STU_FAC_RATIO_2008 ‡</i>	Student to Faculty Ratio
<i>TOTAL_ENROLLMENT_2008</i>	Total Enrollment, Fall 2008
<i>UNDUPEHDCNT_2008</i>	Unduplicated Headcount--Total
<i>UNDUPEHDCNT_UGRD_2008</i>	Unduplicated Headcount--Undergraduates
<i>YIELD_FT_2008</i>	Admissions Yield, Full Time Students, 2008
<i>YIELD_TOTAL_2008</i>	Admissions Yield, Total, 2008

All data is from IPEDS Universe, 2008 survey unless otherwise noted.

† Institutions reporting data from one exam were translated using ACT/SAT concordance tables

‡ Reverse coded since lower values convey maximum prestige

* Binary variable calculated as sums for data analysis

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NOTES

1. The Pac-10 conference has since changed its name to The Pac-12 to represent the actual number of teams in its membership. Other “numbered” conferences have thus far not done the same. Therefore I referred to all conferences by their names prior to the realignment to avoid confusion and provide constancy.