

Who's Earning Money from March Madness?

A breakdown of revenue distribution by teams' academic performance

The NCAA shares revenue from the men's basketball tournament with Division I conferences based on the number of tournament games in which its member institutions play. The Knight Commission examined the \$409 million awarded for performance only in the past five tournaments and found that nearly 36 percent of the funds (\$146.2 million) were earned by institutions whose teams had a NCAA Graduate Success Rate (GSR) under 50 percent. A team with a GSR under 50 percent means that their average four-year cohort graduated less than half their players with each player given six years to graduate. The GSR computation excludes athletes who leave their institutions before graduation provided they are in good academic standing, and would have been athletically eligible had they continued their enrollment. Following is a breakdown of the revenues earned by each Division I conference for their member teams' performance in the past five tournaments, showing how much was earned by teams with GSRs below 50 percent:

NCAA Division I Conference	Revenue earned by conference teams for appearances and wins in 2006-2010 NCAA tournaments	Revenue earned by conference teams with GSR score below 50 percent in 2006-2010 NCAA tournaments	Percentage of total revenue earned by teams with GSR score below 50 percent in 2006-2010 NCAA tournaments
TOTALS	\$409,394,924	\$146,179,564	35.7%
Big 12	\$39,248,674	\$30,072,308	76.6%
Pacific-10	\$41,228,250	\$28,513,050	69.2%
Southeastern (SEC)	\$40,557,610	\$23,367,502	57.6%
Big East	\$58,456,894	\$12,517,804	21.4%
Conference USA	\$13,819,398	\$12,194,124	88.2%
Big Ten	\$37,641,826	\$9,027,394	24.0%
Atlantic Coast (ACC)	\$38,644,072	\$5,828,490	15.1%
Mountain West	\$9,872,734	\$5,667,332	57.4%
Western Athletic (WAC)	\$6,257,538	\$3,852,224	61.6%
Summit (Mid-Continent)	\$3,264,204	\$2,562,670	78.5%
Southwestern Athletic (SWAC)	\$3,503,868	\$2,374,108	67.8%
Mid-Eastern Athletic (MEAC)	\$3,264,204	\$2,228,314	68.3%
West Coast	\$9,222,050	\$1,526,780	16.6%
Big Sky	\$4,300,094	\$1,129,760	26.3%
Patriot	\$4,300,094	\$1,129,760	26.3%
Big West	\$3,264,204	\$1,129,760	34.6%
Missouri Valley	\$13,571,432	\$1,035,890	7.6%
Ohio Valley	\$3,965,738	\$858,890	21.7%
Southern	\$5,267,874	\$461,870	8.8%
Southland	\$4,300,094	\$461,870	10.7%
Atlantic 10	\$13,661,220	\$239,664	1.8%
Colonial Athletic	\$10,401,098	\$0	0.0%
Horizon	\$9,427,050	\$0	0.0%
Sun Belt	\$5,729,744	\$0	0.0%
Metro Atlantic Athletic (MAAC)	\$4,393,964	\$0	0.0%
Big South	\$4,123,094	\$0	0.0%
Northeast	\$3,932,094	\$0	0.0%
Ivy League	\$3,743,532	\$0	0.0%
Mid-American (MAC)	\$3,503,868	\$0	0.0%
America East	\$3,264,204	\$0	0.0%
Atlantic Sun	\$3,264,204	\$0	0.0%

The "total amount of revenue earned for the 2006-2010 NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament Performances" represents only a portion of the total amount actually distributed during the years shown. The NCAA distributes money to conferences for their teams' men's basketball appearances and wins over a rolling six-year period, but this analysis includes only the amounts earned from the tournaments for which GSR scores were available. For example, the amount calculated for the 2007 distribution represents 1/6th of the total NCAA Basketball Fund distribution for 2007 since GSR scores were not published until Fall 2005, meaning that only one tournament (2006) of that particular distribution could be considered in the analysis. Similarly, the April 2011 distribution represents 5/6th of the total NCAA Basketball Fund distribution for 2011 since five of the six tournaments (2006-2010) were considered in the 2011 total. By adding up each of the distributions in the 2007-2011 time period, the NCAA awarded more than \$779 million. However, this research examined a little more than half (\$409.3 million) of the total revenue awarded during those revenue distribution cycles for the reasons described.