

**Competition and Control in The Gridiron Marketplace:
Findings from the Intercollegiate Athletics Leadership Database**

A Report Presented to the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics

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ABSTRACT

Competitive pressures and budgets continue to grow among NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) programs. Expectations for the control of these programs are also shifting. Data from the Intercollegiate Athletics Leadership (IAL) Database offers a baseline measure from the last 21 years to evaluate the mobility and stability of the leadership of Division I FBS programs. This report represents findings from the first attempt to consolidate data for evaluating the term of presidents, athletic directors, and head football coaches from 1991-2011, conference level comparisons, and other changes in the composition of football non-coaching personnel. Presidents had an average term of 8.0 years, athletic directors had an average term of 8.5 years, and head football coaches had an average term of 7.1 years over the period 1991-2011. The turnover of new presidents at FBS institutions each year is relatively unchanged since the advent of the Bowl Championship Series (BCS) championship game in 2006. However, the turnover of head coaches and athletic directors is diverging from that of earlier years. From a pre-BCS turnover rate of 15% for athletic directors, the post-BCS turnover rate is slightly lower at 12%. This is in contrast to head football coaches. The turnover of head football coaches increased from 16% to 19% since the implementation of the BCS. Data from the IAL database will continue to track these and other trends as the new playoff system and other events shape competitive pressures and control of Division I FBS programs.

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College athletics, particularly college football, has captured attention for success on the field and scandal off the field for decades. The contemporary era of football is no different. The competition for coveted playoff spots in the new system beginning in 2014 sits in a long shadow cast by Penn State and recent National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) violations at some of the nation's most prominent institutions. Amidst the playoffs of the future and the scandals of the past are several issues that continue to define big-time college athletics. The arms race among institutions pays high salaries to celebrity head coaches and funds elaborate stadium upgrades. Broadcasting contracts for bowl games and emerging college sports television networks add fuel to a broader football culture for spectators that extend well beyond the college campus.

College football culture is driven by many factors, but one individual - the head football coach - largely defines the football program and in some cases the institution itself. His influence and authority as the symbolic face of the university can surpass even the president or trustees. Competition for head coaches can be fierce and for a select few their tenure on campus is greater than that of the top faculty. Other coaches are known more for their departures over offers from other schools or their inability to quickly produce enough wins.

In recent years, much more is known about the compensation of the head coach. Media outlets such as USA Today and ESPN make data on football coaching salaries available on an annual basis. The head coach's departure is also detailed in the popular press revealing what a head coach earns if even if he is no longer employed or the additional costs associated with attracting a high profile coach.

The demand for winning seasons, bowl game berths, and entry into the new playoff system will likely continue, increasing the pressures for institutions with Division I FBS football programs to hire and retain coaches with winning percentages and success in the post-season. These pressures in the new playoff system will converge with a different set of demands on head coaches if the NCAA Division I Board of Directors passes the Infractions Committee proposals for increased accountability as expected in October 2012. As salaries and competitive pressures grow and new expectations for head coaches emerge, it is not clear if the term of a head coach and other leaders responsible for the oversight of college football is changing.

This report provides measures on another aspect in the contemporary era of college football where success has been judged historically by competition on the field. The findings in this report provide the first results from the Intercollegiate Athletic Leadership (IAL) database and illustrate the length of time head coaches, athletic directors (ADs), and presidents have served in their roles at individual institutions over the past 21 years. The first generation of the IAL database also establishes a system to operationalize non-coaching personnel and evaluate changes in the football staff composition.

Developing an accurate representation of how long leaders of athletic programs are in their position at each institution, the rate of turnover from year-to-year, and how to gauge if there are significant changes over time is an ambitious venture. The first generation of the IAL database consolidates information and offers initial results that demonstrate the capability of the IAL database to track how presidents, athletic directors, and head coaches should be measured and compared to other variables related to college football. As such, this report advances our understanding of how to track individuals and a baseline mark to judge the mobility and stability of the leadership of FBS programs in the future. These findings add another perspective to the

contemporary dialogue on the leadership and control of Division I FBS football programs in the context of events and trends that are rapidly evolving.

BACKGROUND

In 1995 Bobby Bowden of Florida State University received the first \$1 million dollar coaching contract. By 2009, 56 head coaches earned more than \$1 million in contract and other incentives (Wieberg, et al., 2009). In November 2011, Urban Meyer was named the head football coach at Ohio State, receiving \$4 million in salary, bonuses, and separate payments. Gordon Gee, president of Ohio State noted, “We live in a world of markets and opportunities. A number of surgeons here make more than I do. I’m about having the best physics faculty, the best medical school faculty and the best football coach” (Bishop, 2011). Ohio State is not an anomaly. Contracts and buyouts for head football coaches are frequently well above the salary of the highest paid employee of the university or even in a given state.

Aggressive competition for head coaches and the issue of their compensation is not limited to the contemporary era. As early as the 1920s recruiting and retaining head coaches quickly emerged as a contentious dilemma in higher education. “Ambitious teams competed for coaches almost as fiercely as they did for victories” (Watterson, 2000, p. 149-50). The matter of how much institutions compensate a coach has changed little since the 1920s when a full professor made \$2000, yet schools justified salaries of \$9000 for a head coach. Watterson describes a report to the trustees at Centre College where the president observed, “In America a general conviction has taken possession of us that the highest paid man is the important man” (Watterson, 2000, p. 149). The importance of the head coach’s salary and the power his salary conveys in relation to an institution’s president also has a long history. In an attempt to hire Knute Rockne away from Notre Dame he was famously offered a contract by Columbia for

\$25,000 in 1925 – more than any other coach in the country at that time or even most college presidents of the era (Watterson, 2000).

In earlier eras the commercialization in higher education was largely confined to the athletic department (Bok, 2003). Today the marketplace in higher education is one of continually declining resources accompanied by increased demands for innovation in research and creativity in a leading-edge curriculum that is affordable to a wider range of students. Institutions compete with one another for faculty talent, academic prestige, and the increased opportunities presented in the market economy of American society. The entrepreneurial spirit of faculty and students and advances in technology are coupled with declining public revenue from state subsidies for tuition and federal grants for research. Constraints over increased demands and declining resources add incentive for more commercialization across the academy. Robert Zemsky notes, “the challenge, given the constant lure of revenue in a market economy is how to keep commercialism within bounds; that is how do we know when some opportunities are simply inappropriate” (Zemsky, 2009, p. 48). Making those distinctions in athletics is difficult for presidents and athletic directors. There is little incentive for athletic directors to forgo new revenue streams in their athletic departments; especially in the market conditions that currently exist where success on the field is rewarded almost exclusively, regardless of other institutional costs.

Like athletic directors, presidents are also subject to competitive pressures. The fear of falling behind one’s peers often exceeds other considerations. Former University of Arizona president Peter Linkins told *Inside Higher Education*, “If you’re just an aspiring power, you can’t step back and fall further behind. Because, to say it bluntly, it’s a business, and in the business world you simply cannot fail to be competitive” (Grasgreen, 2012). However, it is not just the

fear of falling behind that is problematic for presidents and the institutions they lead. “Markets are notorious for conferring advantage on some at the expense of others” (Zemsky, 2009, p. 39). It is not enough for top universities to just sustain adequate or even exemplary programs, “there must be widespread perception of continued improvement and increasing status” (Toma, 2003, p. 1). Furthermore, Clark Kerr former president of the University of California Berkeley points out that for institutions trying to break into the upper echelon of perceived status, “it is often through new academic specialties and through athletics that the universities seeking to rise in the academic hierarchy can most quickly and easily attract national attention” (Kerr, 2001, p. 68). To this end, it comes as no surprise that replacing a head football coach at most FBS schools garners widespread national attention, as does any remaining salary on his previous contract and the agreement he signs with a new school.

Some argue that there is a win-at-any cost ethic that prevails in many of America’s institutions of higher learning and as a result coaches can command high salaries and lucrative contract incentives. Others argue that, “coaches are not the problem. They represent a symptom of the process by which school sports are big business and where winning is the only avenue to achieve success” (Eitzen, 2009, p. 230). The perspective from coaches of high profile programs underscores the issue of the pressure to quickly produce competitive, winning football programs. Coaches must win quickly and on the largest stage possible. The responsibility for entertaining spectators, cultivating boosters, and leveraging the influence of political leaders in addition to providing financial support to the of the rest of the athletic program results in many forces at the top. Head coaches cite the dismissal of their peers who do not succeed as evidence of the win-at-any cost environment (Knight Commission, 2001).

Another issue in the win-at-any cost pressure is the expansion in the department that goes relatively unnoticed. With the exception of high profile coaching changes, intercollegiate athletics decision-making is “often low profile, decentralized and incremental” (Estler & Nelson, 2005, p. 4). The areas of football operations and player development have expanded the football program infrastructure to meet constantly growing demands placed on football coaches and players.

Finally, college football “is more about teams and institutions – and their customs and traditions – than about star players. It is the name on the front of the jersey that matters” (Toma, 2003, p. 247). The leadership of college football – the head coach, athletic director, and president – serves as a proxy, both individually and collectively for the institution itself among many FBS member universities. This report presents data on institutions with Division I FBS football programs from 1991-2011. This report presents a model to estimate the term of head football coaches, athletic directors, and presidents and baseline measures to evaluate the mobility and stability of the leadership of FBS programs from the last 21 years. It also offers insights for how to evaluate the expansion of the football coaches and staff who fulfill the ever-increasing demands of Division I FBS college athletic programs.

FOOTBALL PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION & STAFFING

For the purposes of this report administrators, coaches and staff with responsibility for oversight of the football program and day-to-day operations are organized into three main groups: 1) Presidents & Athletic Directors, 2) Coaching Staff, and 3) Non-Coaching Personnel (See Figure 1).

Presidents and Athletic Directors

Presidents and athletic directors have significant power and oversight of the football program with regard to external operations. They coordinate relationships with the NCAA, athletics conferences, campus faculty, and alumni. These individuals are responsible for the oversight and integrity of the football program within the athletic department.

Coaching Staff

Coaches are responsible for “on-the-field” practices and game-day coaching duties. Coaches work directly with players on the execution of football drills, plays, and skill development at practices. They are responsible for play on the field during games. Head coaches and assistant coaches are further defined by the NCAA as, “any coach who is designated by the institution’s athletics department to perform coaching duties and who serves in the capacity on a volunteer or paid basis” (NCAA, 2011, p. 47). Through the 2011 football season the NCAA permitted one head coach, nine assistant coaches, and two graduate assistant coaches.¹ Graduate assistant (GA) coaches are those individuals who qualify for a graduate assistantship under the institution’s policies and are enrolled in at least 50 percent of the institutions regular graduate program course of study. GA coaches are permitted to conduct the same practice and game duties as other assistant coaches, but are not permitted to perform most recruiting duties or functions. GA appointments are generally limited to two years.

Non-Coaching Personnel

Non-coaching personnel who perform the day-to-day operations “off-the-field” provide support of the football program related to the competitive aspects of practices or games. Generally speaking, non-coaching personnel are not permitted to coach in typical football field drills during practice or game-day coaching. There are also limitations on recruiting duties for

¹ Effective August 1, 2012 graduate assistants increased from two to four at FBS football programs.

non-coaching personnel. For the purposes of this report “off-the-field” support provided by non-coaching personnel is further divided into three categories:

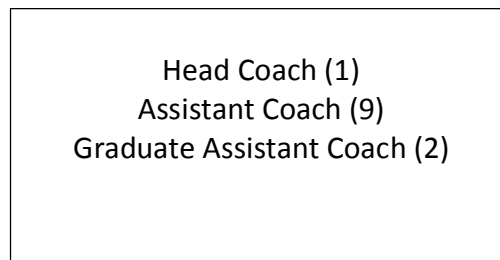
1. ***Coaching Support Staff.*** Coaching support staff work directly with football coaches, but are not permitted to engage in “on-the-field” activities. These individuals perform many of the administrative duties related to organizing and executing practices, attend coaching meetings, observe film, or analyze practice and game statistics. Many do not have other department responsibilities. A key feature of these individuals is their connection to the head coach or specific assistant coach. With a coaching change these individuals may also leave the institution or are not retained with the incoming coach or coaches.
2. ***Football Administration & Staff.*** Individuals who work primarily with football and provide non-coaching football support or who oversee specific duties related to football may also perform similar duties for selected sports. However, their primary attachment is to the football program and the head coach. Duties are external to what happens in practice or games and some job titles may also include assistant athletic director or director responsibilities.
3. ***Department Support.*** These individuals, like other football staff, work almost exclusively with the football program and provide department support of football. The distinguishing factors for department support are the proximity to the football program and/or to the department. Although they have high proximity and attachment to the football program and coaching staff, they are less likely to change institutions through a coaching change.

Figure 1: Football Administration and Staff

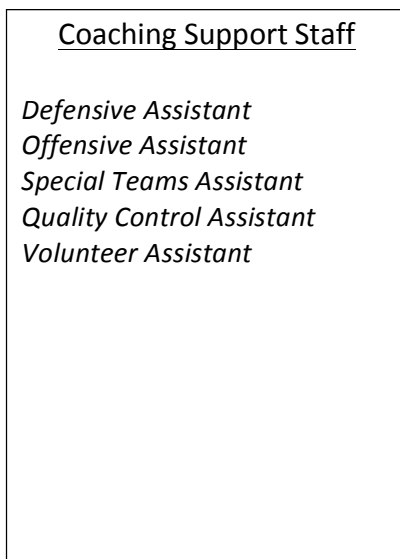
Administration



“On-The-Field” Coaching Staff



“Off-The-Field” Non-Coaching Personnel



For this report, non-coaching personnel are limited to the football program staff and administrators where the primary emphasis supporting coaches or preparing student-athletes for practices and games. It does not include athletic department staff from academic support services, sports psychology and nutrition. Additionally, department support are included only if the job title is specific to football (i.e. Athletic Trainer for Football).

INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS LEADERSHIP DATABASE

The data for this report was drawn from the *Intercollegiate Athletics Leadership Database*. This database houses information on the personnel and institutions related to the leadership and staffing of Division I FBS college football. Data for the personnel, institutional, and conference information was collected from publically available sources including: Collegiate Directories, institutional media guides, institutional athletics and campus websites, and several other media and independent websites related to college football programs, coaches, and institutions. The data was prepared from paper sources, pdfs, and online databases, checked for accuracy, and prepared for the IAL database. Individuals were accounted for in their position for each year based on the start of the fall football season for that respective year. See Table 1 for a complete list of football administration and staffing from the IAL database.

Data Sources

All data sources for the IAL database are publically available. Data sources include Collegiate Directories Men's Edition's for 1991-1992 through 2003-2004 obtained in paper format from Collegiate Directories and the 2007-08 and 2008-09 combined edition of the Collegiate Directories. Print files were prepared for optical character recognition (OCR) scanning and scanned using a customized OCR scanning program. There was a total of 7

individual years of missing and incomplete data for 1996-97 and incomplete for 2004-05 through 2006-07. Data for 2009-10 through 2011-12 was not provided.

Missing data fields were populated from institutional websites, football program media guides, and independent websites related to college football. Data was triangulated from publically available sources including athletic department and institutional websites, football media guides and websites related to college football. Data was cleaned and checked for accuracy. Data was structured and modeled for specific queries on institutions, conferences, and individuals for output from the database.

Limitations

Data for this database comes from secondary, publically available sources. One of the limitations of secondary data is that the data was not originally intended for this purpose of evaluating the term of institutional leaders or quantifying non-coaching personnel. Data from the IAL database represents individuals in roles at specific institutions, not the actual term of an individual career. Therefore individual careers are not captured in full in the earliest years of the data (i.e. 1991) and active coaches, ADs, or presidents with recent changes in institutions depress the average term of roles in the latter years (i.e. 2011). For this report, the most representative information for individuals is captured by an annual cohort view in the years between 1995 and 2007.

In addition, not all employees with responsibilities for football are consistently accounted for in Collegiate Directories, department online staff directories, or media guides. When possible, multiple sources were triangulated to improve the accuracy of reporting. President, athletic director, and head coach are the most consistent and the most easily triangulated. A

sample of complete non-coaching personnel data was obtained for 48 institutions for a subset of six sample years (1991, 1995, 1999, 2003, 2007, and 2011).

Table 1: Football Administration Roles & Titles

Role	Title
Administration	President, Chancellor, Superintendent Athletic Director Interim & Acting titles
Coaching Staff	Head Coach (1) Assistant Coaches (9) Graduate Assistants (2) ²
Coaching Support Staff	Defensive Assistant Offensive Assistant Special Teams Assistant Quality Control Assistant Volunteer Assistant
Football Administration & Support	Football Operations, includes Assistant or Associate Athletic Director for Football Operations Equipment Manager High School Relations Player Development Player Personnel Recruiting Coordinator ³ Strength & Conditioning Video Coordinator
Department Support	Administrative Support Athletic Training Sports Information

² Through 2011 two Graduate Assistants were permitted. This increases to four in 2012.

³ Discontinued in 2006 per NCAA guidelines.

FINDINGS:

FOOTBALL PROGRAM CONTROL AND COMPETITION FOR PRESIDENTS, ATHLETIC DIRECTORS, AND COACHES

The control of the athletic department and specifically, the football program has received increased attention by the NCAA's Division I Board of Directors. The oversight of these programs falls largely on three individuals, the president, athletic director, and head coach. This section details the length of time these individuals have served in these roles at each institution from 1991-2011. These findings offer a picture of how long individuals have been in their role at individual institutions over the past 21 years and a baseline for evaluating how the term of these roles changes in future years. There are approximately 1500 individual instances for president, athletic director, and head football coach at institutions in the IAL database.

NCAA Division I football is divided into FBS and FCS. Findings are limited to the FBS member schools. The 2011 FBS conference membership is the peer group configuration for this report. In 2011, there were 120 FBS member schools organized into 11 conferences (116 schools) and an additional category of schools without conference affiliation in football known as independents (4 schools). Some conferences are separated into divisions for conference play. Currently, Bowl Championship Series (BCS) post-season play is determined by conference affiliation and grouped into 2 categories of bowl championship series status – automatic qualifiers (AQ) and non-automatic qualifiers (Non-AQ). See Appendix, *NCAA FBS Conferences and their BCS Configuration as of 2011* for a full list of 2011 conferences and independents by BCS status.

Football Program Control: Presidents

Responsibility for the overall control of the athletic department and the football program itself falls under the institution's president (Duderstadt, 2003). The university president is subject

to many additional responsibilities and pressures that can influence who becomes the institution's president, how long he or she serves in the role, and the circumstances of their departure at a given institution (American Council on Education, 2012). Findings on presidents presented in this report are for the purpose of comparing presidents to other leaders (i.e. athletic directors and head football coaches) in the context of athletics and does not address other institutional influences.

Presidents of FBS institutions from 1991-2011 had an overall average term at each institution of 8.0 years (Table 2). This is based on the average of 8.03 years from the most representative cohort of presidents (Table 3). The overall average turnover of presidents per year across all FBS institutions is 18 per year or a turnover rate of 16% (Table 4). For the years 2006-2011 since the BCS championship game was implemented in 2006 the average turnover of presidents is unchanged (Table 5 & 6).

Table 2: Overall Average Term By Role

	Overall Average Term Per School
President	8.0
Athletic Director	8.5
Head Coach	7.1

Table 3: Average Term By Role

	1995	1999	2003	2007	Cohort Average
President	7.72	8.41	8.48	7.49	8.03
Athletic Director	8.01	8.91	9.28	7.98	8.55
Head Football Coach	6.81	7.49	7.33	6.59	7.06

Football Program Control: Athletic Directors

The athletic director manages the administration of day-to-day athletic department operations and activities such as the welfare of student-athletes, hiring and firing of coaches,

budget oversight, facility management, coordination with the conference and NCAA, and overall integrity of the athletic department (Duderstadt, 2003). Among Division I FBS athletic programs, management of football program operations is a primary aspect of the athletic director's role.

Athletic directors interface with many campus, community, and conference constituents on behalf of the department and football program. The athletic director is a key conduit between the head football coach and the university president. In previous eras the athletic director was often promoted from the institution's coaches, most commonly the football coach. That type of promotion is noted in this data set, but overall a rare occurrence given the complexity of today's athletic department.

Athletic directors at FBS institutions between 1991-2011 had an overall average term of 8.5 years (Table 2). The average is drawn from the most representative cohort of athletic directors for the years 1995, 1999, 2003, and 2007, which had an average of 8.55 years (Table 3). The overall average turnover of athletic directors per year across all FBS institutions is slightly lower than presidents at 16 per year or a turnover rate of 14% (Table 4). For the years since the BCS championship game was implemented in 2006 the average turnover for athletic directors decreased (Table 5 & 6).

Table 4: Number of New Hires in All FBS By Year & Position and Percent Change

	1992	1995	1999	2003	2007	2011	1992-2011 Average
President	16 (15%)	19 (18%)	10 (9%)	19 (16%)	19 (16%)	11 (9%)	18 (16%)
Athletic Director	13 (12%)	21 (19%)	10 (9%)	12 (10%)	9 (8%)	5 (4%)	16 (14%)
Head Football Coach	19 (18%)	23 (21%)	21 (18%)	17 (15%)	23 (19%)	25 (21%)	19 (17%)

Table 5: Number of New Hires By Position 2006-Present

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2006-11 Average
President	16 (13%)	19 (16%)	19 (16%)	25 (21%)	21 (18%)	11 (9%)	19 (15%)
Athletic Director	29 (24%)	9 (8%)	17 (14%)	8 (7%)	21 (18%)	5 (4%)	15 (12%)
Head Football Coach	18 (15%)	23 (19%)	20 (17%)	22 (18%)	25 (21%)	25 (21%)	22 (19%)

Competition For Coaches

At the Division I FBS level the individual movement of these very visible coaches from school to school is highly scrutinized and once in place at an FBS institution the “responsibility for program control and integrity rests firmly with the coach” (Duderstadt, 2003, p. 105). Head coaches of FBS institutions from 1991-2011 had an overall average term lower than presidents and athletic directors of 7.1 years at each institution (Table 2). The average is 7.06 years from the most representative cohort of head coaches (Table 3). The overall average turnover of head coaches per year across all FBS institutions is 19 per year or a turnover rate of 17%, which is slightly higher than presidents and athletic directors (Table 4). For all years before the BCS championship, the turnover rate is 18 per year, which is consistent with the rate of presidents but higher than athletic directors. Since the BCS championship game was implemented in 2006 the average turnover is higher than athletic directors and presidents with an average of 22 per year and a rate of 19% (Table 5 & 6). (See also Appendix, *Turnover By Position and Year* for year-by-year turnover by position).

Table 6: Average Number of New Hires Pre- & Post-BCS Championship Game System

	All Years 1992-2011	Pre-BCS 1992-2005	Post-BCS 2006-2011
President	18 (16%)	18 (16%)	19 (15%)
Athletic Director	16 (14%)	17 (15%)	15 (12%)
Head Football Coach	19 (17%)	18 (16%)	22 (19%)

Conference Level Comparisons

Conference level comparisons from the IAL database presented are based on the 2011 configuration of FBS conference alignment and independents. Among the 11 FBS conferences and 4 independents the overall term of a president is 8.13 years (Table 7). When divided into BCS AQ and non-AQ schools, the average is similar at 8.06 and 8.22 years respectively (Table 7). Athletic directors have an overall average of 8.37 years and a BCS AQ conference average higher at 9.79 years and lower among non-AQ conference schools at 6.67 years (Table 8). Lastly, head football coaches have an overall conference average of 7.04 years. Head football coaches at AQ conferences have an average of 7.58 years and 6.40 years at non-AQ conferences (Table 9). For more on individual conference comparisons by BCS status see Appendix, *Average Term By Position, Conference, & BCS Status*.

Table 7: President Average Term By Conference and BCS Status

President	1995	1999	2003	2007	Conference Average
All Conferences	7.99	8.49	8.53	7.53	8.13
AQ Conferences	7.55	8.59	8.32	7.77	8.06
Non-AQ Conferences	8.50	8.37	8.78	7.23	8.22

Table 8: Athletic Director Average Term By Conference and BCS Status

Athletic Director	1995	1999	2003	2007	Conference Average
All Conferences	7.71	8.68	9.15	7.94	8.37
AQ Conferences	9.08	10.34	10.27	9.46	9.79
Non-AQ Conferences	6.07	6.68	7.81	6.13	6.67

Table 9: Head Coach Average Term By Conference and BCS Status

Head Football Coach	1995	1999	2003	2007	Conference Average
All Conferences	6.62	7.35	7.56	6.64	7.04
AQ Conferences	6.98	8.08	8.18	7.09	7.58
Non-AQ Conferences	6.19	6.47	6.82	6.11	6.40

NON-COACHING PERSONNEL (i.e. “Off-The-Field Staff”)

Acosta and Carpenter (2012) have chronicled growth in the number of several athletic department employee categories since 1986 and the Knight Commission on athletics has raised concerns over an arms race in football that includes an increase non-coaching personnel (Knight Commission, 2001 & n.d). Defining non-coaching personnel is a challenge due to the wide variation in the football program infrastructure, department-level organization, and job titles. There is also wide variability in the reporting of non-coaching roles based on job titles in staff directories and media guides. Furthermore, the support of paid and unpaid graduate and undergraduate assistantships and internships further complicate the issue of what constitutes non-coaching personnel. Simply put the issue of non-coaching personnel is difficult to quantify.

Non-coaching personnel are an area of football program staffing where NCAA policies place limitations on coaching and recruiting activities, but job titles vary widely from institution-

to-institution and year-to-year. Additionally, unless specifically identified in the job title with direct responsibility for football (i.e. Strength Coach-Football), it is difficult to demonstrate which staff work with football only and which staff provide support football to other teams. To illustrate the increases in non-coaching personnel, data was collected from the IAL database and a sample of 48 media guides provide a more authentic picture of changes in non-coaching personnel with “off-the-field” responsibilities (See Table 1). “Off-The-Field” or non-coaching personnel are grouped into three categories – coaching support staff, football administration & staff, and department support.

Coaching Support Staff

Non-coaching personnel in the category of coaching support staff are not part of the on-the-field coaching staff (see *Football Administration & Staff* section). Individuals in this category appear with the titles of defensive assistant, offensive assistant, defensive or offensive quality control assistant, or volunteer assistant. These personnel do not appear in data that populates the IAL database. Coaching support staff varies widely from school to school in institutional media guides. Job descriptions in media guides are vague and individuals are noted to serve in this role only in very limited years. In a subset from media guide samples, football coaching support staff ranged from 0-5 additional staff (Table 12).

Football Administration and Support

Football administration and support personnel hold the titles of football operations, high school or player personnel (and related), recruiting coordinator, strength and conditioning, equipment, and video coordinator. From 1991 to 2011 there were significant changes in the number and type of non-coaching personnel that provide off the field support to the coaching staff and football program. First the role of recruiting coordinator began to decline before being

eliminated as non-coaching position and assigned to an assistant coach (NCAA, 2011).

Meanwhile, football operations directors and video coordinators became more common (Table 10).

Table 10: Changes in Selected Football Administration & Support

	1991	1995	1999	2003	2007	2011
Recruiting Coordinator	27	5	4	3	*	*
Football Operations	2	13	18	77	113	124
Video Coordinator	0	59	86	96	101	117

Video coordinators increased from zero in 1991 to 117 in 2011. From 1991-2011 directory listings of football operations directors and assistant or associate athletic directors for operations increased from two in 1991 to 124 in 2011. The growth in football operations is associated with three job titles – Director of Football Operations, Assistant, or Associate, Athletic Director (Table 10). Additionally, the increase in the area of operations is not limited to one individual in this role per school. Some institutions have a combination of personnel with football operations in their job title (i.e. Director of Football Operations and Assistant Director of Football Operations). The increase in football operations directors with assistant or associate athletic director titles are notable for their a job title that may have a role in the overall management of the athletic department and any senior level administration pay scale that may be appropriate at the institutional level (See Table 11).

Table 11: Changes in Football Operations

	1991	1995	1999	2003	2007	2011
Assistant/Associate Athletic Director	0	9	11	15	22	29
Director	2	4	7	76	90	92
Total Football Operations	2	13	18	91	112	121

Football support positions in equipment manager and strength and conditioning coach appear at all institutions consistently throughout the IAL database. Some institutions designate personnel formally by job title to football. Other institutions use more informal assignments to football and other team responsibilities. Formal designation to football in the position of strength coach in the IAL database grew from 1 in 1991 to 18 in 2011. Prior to 2012, strength and conditioning coaches could conduct, “flexibility, warm-up, and physical conditioning activities” before practices or games without inclusion in the on-the-field coaching limits (NCAA, 2011, p. 54). Changes in the 2012 NCAA Division I bylaws now designate a limit of five strength and conditioning coaches that work with football programs in any capacity.

Presentation of Non-Coaching Personnel in Media Guides

There are limitations on what the data in the IAL database captures for some aspects of non-coaching personnel. Limitations are related to correctly identifying coaching support staff personnel and differentiating which off-the-field football administration and support personnel work with only with football and those that do not. To better illustrate the growth of non-coaching personnel and the types of duties they perform, media guides provide additional context for the type of non-coaching personnel and the duties they perform that support the football program.

To evaluate non-coaching personnel from media guides (also known as almanacs or factbooks), 48 institutions were selected from the 2011 list of Division I FBS member institutions. The sample is made up of 2 schools from each FBS conference, 11 private and 27 public institutions, and is distributed across an even distribution of states and geographical regions. Media guides were evaluated for a sample that illustrates notable information providing the best examples of the variety of non-coaching personnel and a description of duties. Six media guides were selected. In this sample of six, four are from BCS AQ conference schools, one recently changed conferences and one team is from a recent national championship game. There are variety of conferences and regions represented in the sample. The non-coaching personnel sections were evaluated and coded based on the criteria in Table 1.

Media guides in this sample illustrate a sub-set of non-coaching personnel that ranges from 8-20 additional staff (8, 10, 11, 13, 18, 20 respectively). These include a variety of traditional equipment and strength and conditioning roles in addition to roles that are less clear in the type of responsibility or duties performed such as Defensive Assistant or Director of Football Relations. The most common number for football support is 7 additional staff and the department support ranges from 1-8 additional staff noted in the media guide (Table 12).

Table 12: Media Guide Sample

School	Coaching Support Staff	Football Administration & Support	Department Support	Total Non-Coaching Staff
1 Public AQ	4	8	8	20
2 Private AQ	2	7	4	13
3 Public	0	7	1	8
4 Private AQ	0	7	4	11
5 Public AQ	2	3	5	10
6 Private AQ	5	11	2	18

When descriptions of duties are available in media guides, the complexity of additional support of FBS football programs that is needed becomes clear. For example, equipment manager duties are not limited to proper maintenance and fitting of equipment for student-athletes. In addition to oversight of the equipment budget and inventory for the entire athletic program the individual responsible for equipment may also coordinate the department’s apparel contract, overseeing branding and licensing, or “expanding the university’s brand recognition through retail merchandise sales” (Sample Guide 4). There may also be a staff of several in the equipment area with one or two specifically assigned to football.

Job titles designated as football operations, player development, player personnel, and high school relations have a variety of duties related to working with prospective athletes, current players, and helping student-athletes transition to the NFL. Duties such as camps, clinics, team travel, recruiting, unofficial visits for prospective students and families, prospective athlete video, game day operations, liaison with senior athletic department staff, oversight of program social media, and liaison with NFL representatives, professional scouts and player agents are all examples of duties described in the sample of media guides. Many traditional recruiting duties

(i.e. direct contact with prospective student-athletes) are noted in the description of an assistant coach, but the administration of recruiting is attached to several individual descriptions in media guides. The NCAA has specific rules around the types of contact that individual coaches and non-coaching personnel can have with prospective student athletes, but activities such as maintaining records, organizing visits, and evaluating students through video or other records are often in football operations and related titles found in media guide descriptions.

Finally, the position of strength and conditioning has several traditional roles but staff descriptions reveal some notable aspects of this role. It is common for the strength and conditioning personnel titles to appear as Strength and Conditioning Coach and in other instances this role is filled by an Assistant Athletic Director for Athletic Performance. Although not widespread in the sample, there are instances of graduate students who are noted as Strength and Conditioning Graduate Assistants.

Like the variability in the titles and duties noted in the IAL database, the inconsistency in media guide descriptions of non-coaching personnel underscores the irregularity of job titles and duties that are considered “off-the-field” in the overall management of the football program. The variety of duties, fluctuation in how they are carried out from institution-to-institution, changes from year-to-year, and the vague nature of some titles in media guides or department directories present challenges to evaluating the non-coaching personnel role.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The tension between big time sports markets and the democratic mission of higher education is a constant reminder that who is hired matters; how long a football coach is in his position matters. Stability in a head coach, assistant coaches, and football staff can bring some consistency to program costs and provide continuity for student-athletes who can count on the

individuals that recruited them to be there to mentor them. Although some institutions promote head coaches from within the assistant coaching staff when there is a head coach vacancy, other institutions hire from outside the football program (Bachman, 2012). Unchecked power or recirculating coaches who produce wins on the field, but were terminated at a previous institution or the NFL for off-the-field issues, fuels a football culture where institutions are left with little choice but to risk educational values in pursuit of coaches who can bring gridiron success.

The control of these FBS athletic programs in the market of big time sports is an area of concern for many, including college presidents. A survey of 122 presidents from NCAA Division I institutions found that only 25.2% agree or strongly agree that presidents are in control of their athletic programs (Green, Jaschik, & Lederman, 2012, p. 18). Events over the last several years and the proposed changes by the NCAA Division I Board of Directors underscore the fact that governance of athletics and implementation of policies must not be separated from the broader campus governance. University governing boards and faculty (i.e. members of the faculty, leaders of the faculty senate, the institution's FAR) do not typically participate in the day-to-day operations of college athletics. However, the implications of who is hired to lead the institution and the football program and how often these individuals change positions are important for the campus community to consider.

The data in this report presents initial data from all FBS member schools and conferences for the average term and of turnover presidents, athletic directors, and head coaches. This first set of results from the IAL database provides additional context to the contemporary issues related to the culture of Division I football. These results also offer background for the dialogue about conditions related to longevity of these individuals and what it means for stability of the football

program. Establishing these initial measures raises several important issues about the utility of this first set of data from the IAL database for institutions.

First, there are many reasons why an individual president, athletic director, or head coach may change institutions. Among these are retirement, the appeal of another institution's offer, or opportunities in areas beyond higher education. Second, individual institutions must also assess the conditions by which a reappointment or contract extension is appropriate. However, making a change in a head coach or athletic director can be a contentious decision. Although, 86.7% of Division I presidents agree or strongly agree that the institution's board would "back me if I had major conflicts with top coaches or athletic directors" more support for accountability from campus leadership is warranted (Green, Jaschik, & Lederman, 2012, p. 18). Lastly, wins on the field and conduct off the field are often the most visible measures to evaluate gridiron success. Campus leaders should appraise the current term of the head football coach and the size and composition of the program's staff, for how these measures impact the welfare of student athletes and culture of the athletic department. The findings from this report offer national and conference level estimates from the last 21 years of FBS college football as comparison points about the longevity and control for evaluating the staff and leadership of the football program. Individual institutions would be well served to address questions about turnover and stability that are specific to the culture, events, and resources of their own athletic department and institution.

For greater accountability about the oversight and control of the football program, the following recommendations are suggested to evaluate the longevity of presidents, athletic directors, and head coaches for campus, conference, and NCAA levels of policy making. Suggestions for future research are also presented.

Recommendations

- ***Evaluate the term of the athletic program leaders.*** How does the term of the current football coach, athletic director, and president compare to the conference, all FBS programs, and previous leaders at the institution? What are the implications of length of time these individuals have had for the accountability of the program and authority on campus?
- ***Evaluate the frequency of turnover and relationship of turnover between the head coach, athletic director and president.*** What is the right balance of power and authority between these three at individual institutions? Does the campus governing board support the president to provide accountability for the athletic program?
- ***Justify future contracts for head coaches based on a wider set of criteria.*** What determines the length of the initial contract or contract extensions and how does this compare to the conference, all FBS coaches, and previous coaches at the institution? Why is the new contract length appropriate given the contemporary big time sport market and current institutional needs? How does the length of contract compare to previous coaches at the institution or the average term of conference peers and all FBS programs?
- ***Assess the composition of the football program coaching and non-coaching staff and their responsibilities.*** How does the new NCAA allowance of 4 four football graduate assistants and the growth of assistant and associate athletic director associated with football operations shape the composition of the football program staff? What are the implications for “on-the-field” safety of student-athletes and costs for “off-the-field” administration of the program?

Future Research

This report focuses on the control and leadership of college football programs at the top. There are many other aspects that would shed further light on the context and trends of coaching and staffing of Division I intercollegiate athletics programs. College football drives intercollegiate athletics. With the volatility of conference alignment in recent years and the emergence of the college football superconference on the horizon (Rhoden, 2012), the baseline data presented in this report provides the foundation for the impact of these and other events in the future. Establishing the IAL database and demonstrating its potential with the first set of data opens up possibilities for the addition of other traditional on-the-field variables such as win-loss, salary data, or final standings that may influence the term of presidents, athletic directors, and

head football coaches. Furthermore, the next generation of the database should attempt to develop additional data models that further refine the findings from this report. As the new playoff system approaches and conference re-alignment continues, developing the best model to track the term of these leaders makes an important contribution to the dialogue on big-time college athletics. Suggestions for further research and reporting from the IAL database include:

- Continue to evaluate the best measure of term and turnover. Given the characteristics of institution-based, categorical data, what other data-structures can be developed for queries in the IAL database that offer a more robust view of changes over time in intercollegiate athletics.
- Expand to all Division I programs – how do presidents, athletic directors, and head coaches from FCS member schools compare to FBS programs?
- Evaluate conference realignment – what patterns, if any, are present in the turnover of football program leadership as institutions form new alliances based on FBS conference status?
- Evaluate the term of assistant football coaches – the significance of the role of the assistant college football coach cannot be understated. Assistant coaches work closely with prospective student athletes and current players on the team. Analysis of assistant coach average term at each institution, trends in mobility, and attachment to specific conferences or head coaches can shed light on the pressures they encounter.
- Continue to monitor non-coaching personnel - future research should investigate the number of non-coaching personnel and their salaries relative to the coaching staff. Future research should also track the impact of the additional two football GAs to the on-the-field coaching staff to determine if this influences the overall size or composition of non-coaching personnel.
- Include measures for gender and ethnicity – evaluate the mobility and stability of women and leaders of color at the president and athletic director level with oversight of FBS football programs. Do these leaders or head coaches differ in their mobility or stability patterns in comparison to the findings in this report?

CONCLUSION

College athletics at the Division I level, like several other aspects of campus activities, competes for the best personnel and facilities. The value system of FBS football culture is permeated by the sportscenterization of college athletics. The rituals and pageantry of college

football are set as a backdrop to coaches who are the most visible spokesperson for the institution and students are cast as spectators who come to college to be entertained (Stannard, 2012).

Because college sports are an enormous source of pride and identification well beyond the campus, institutions are willing to underwrite financial deficits and assume a multitude of risks (Toma, 2003). In this context, big time football programs often overwhelm the educational values of higher education institutions. This tension between intercollegiate athletics and the institution's educational mission are set in a culture driven by market values and success on the field.

The competition for Division I head coaches is fierce and is not likely to wane as the new playoff system emerges in 2014. For those schools with successful programs on the gridiron, the new playoffs (semifinal and national championship games), and related bowl games are estimated to bring in an additional \$600 million in revenue (Grasgreen, 2012). Suggested changes to the enforcement model by the NCAA Division I Board of, if passed in October 2012, will also shape the demand for coaches who can manage a high profile FBS football program off the field (NCAA, 2012). Given these conditions, competition for the head football coach and challenges related to control of the football program by presidents and athletic directors are certain to persist.

This report provides a baseline to compare the average term and turnover of presidents, athletic directors, and head football coaches to the years before the BCS championship game and after the implementation of the new playoff system.

APPENDIX

NCAA FBS Conferences and their BCS Configuration as of 2011

Conference	Members	Divisions	Conference Championship	BCS Status
Atlantic Coast Conference	12	Atlantic (6) Coastal (6)	Yes	Automatic Qualifier
Big 12 Conference	10	None	No	Automatic Qualifier
Big East Conference	8	None	No	Automatic Qualifier
Big Ten Conference	12	Legends (6) Leaders (6)	Yes	Automatic Qualifier
Conference USA	12	East (6) West (6)	Yes	Non-Automatic Qualifier
Pacific 12 Conference	12	North (6) South (6)	Yes	Automatic Qualifier
Mid-American Conference	13	East (7) West (6)	Yes	Non-Automatic Qualifier
Mountain West Conference	8	None	No	Non-Automatic Qualifier
Southeastern Conference	12	Western (6) Eastern (6)	Yes	Automatic Qualifier
Sun Belt Conference	9	None	No	Non-Automatic Qualifier
Western Athletic Conference	8	None	No	Non-Automatic Qualifier
Independents	4	n/a	n/a	Army Brigham Young University Navy Notre Dame*

*Notre Dame – Automatic Qualifier per specific conditions based on BCS agreements

NCAA Division I FBS President, Athletic Director, & Head Coach Change By Number and Percent Per Year

Position	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
President	16	24	15	19	27	17	18	10	18	20	15	19	27	13	16	19	19	25	21	11
	15%	23%	14%	18%	24%	15%	16%	9%	16%	17%	13%	16%	23%	11%	13%	16%	16%	21%	18%	9%
Athletic Director	13	23	23	21	22	11	20	10	15	13	22	12	18	13	29	9	17	8	21	5
	12%	22%	21%	19%	20%	10%	18%	9%	13%	11%	19%	10%	15%	11%	24%	8%	14%	7%	18%	4%
Head Coach	19	15	16	23	12	27	14	21	17	27	13	17	13	22	18	23	20	22	25	25
	18%	14%	15%	21%	11%	24%	13%	18%	15%	23%	11%	15%	11%	19%	15%	19%	17%	18%	21%	21%

Average Term By Position, Conference, & BCS Status

President	1995	1999	2003	2007	1995-2007 Average
Atlantic Coast Conference	7.44	8.75	9.13	8.57	8.47
Big 12 Conference	8.90	9.67	9.22	9.00	9.20
Big East Conference	9.83	10.29	10.00	7.67	9.45
Big Ten Conference	5.92	6.79	7.38	7.36	6.86
Pac-12 Conference	7.08	8.33	7.73	6.83	7.49
Southeastern Conference	6.15	7.73	6.46	7.17	6.88
AQ Conferences	7.55	8.59	8.32	7.77	8.06

President	1995	1999	2003	2007	1995-2007 Average
Conference USA	8.56	10.27	9.08	10.18	9.52
Mid-American Conference	7.64	8.17	8.09	6.50	7.60
Mountain West Conference	6.43	6.11	7.71	5.56	6.45
Sun Belt Conference	9.75	7.80	9.00	6.22	8.19
Western Athletic Conference	10.14	9.50	10.00	7.71	9.34
Non-AQ Conferences	8.50	8.37	8.78	7.23	8.22

Athletic Director	1995	1999	2003	2007	1995-2007 Average
Atlantic Coast Conference	9.20	11.00	11.62	11.38	10.80
Big 12 Conference	6.30	10.10	9.30	9.60	8.83
Big East Conference	7.50	11.29	9.67	10.22	9.67
Big Ten Conference	11.18	10.25	10.27	7.46	9.79
Pac-12 Conference	10.64	10.25	10.25	8.58	9.93
Southeastern Conference	9.67	9.15	10.50	9.50	9.71
AQ Conferences	9.08	10.34	10.27	9.46	9.79

Athletic Director	1995	1999	2003	2007	1995-2007 Average
Conference USA	6.17	7.89	8.50	6.83	7.35
Mid-American Conference	5.36	6.75	8.30	5.92	6.58
Mountain West Conference	6.17	7.50	10.25	5.88	7.45
Sun Belt Conference	5.50	5.00	6.00	5.63	5.53
Western Athletic Conference	7.14	6.29	6.00	6.38	6.45
Non-AQ Conferences	6.07	6.68	7.81	6.13	6.67

Average Term By Position, Conference, & BCS Status, Continued

Head Football Coach	1995	1999	2003	2007	1995-2007 Average
Atlantic Coast Conference	7.42	8.00	8.83	7.75	8.00
Big 12 Conference	7.40	9.30	9.30	8.00	8.50
Big East Conference	6.29	7.57	8.22	5.67	6.94
Big Ten Conference	8.00	9.42	9.73	7.67	8.71
Pac-12 Conference	6.75	7.38	5.75	6.50	6.60
Southeastern Conference	6.00	6.83	7.25	6.92	6.75
AQ Conferences	6.98	8.08	8.18	7.09	7.58

Head Football Coach	1995	1999	2003	2007	1995-2007 Average
Conference USA	7.78	7.92	6.75	5.67	7.03
Mid-American Conference	6.00	6.33	5.08	5.25	5.67
Mountain West Conference	7.86	6.63	7.38	6.63	7.13
Sun Belt Conference	3.75	4.60	7.67	6.43	5.61
Western Athletic Conference	5.57	6.89	7.22	6.56	6.56
Non-AQ Conferences	6.19	6.47	6.82	6.11	6.40

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