





Destination of 2018 NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Transfers

December 2018

Summary of Findings

- ▶ From 2017 to 2018 there was no substantial change in the number of transfers in Division I men's basketball.
- ▶ In 2018, 65 teams (19% of all Division I teams) had 4 or more transfer departures.
- ▶ Just under half of Division I men's basketball transfers remain in Division I, while one quarter move to Division II and one quarter transfer to NAIA/NJCAA programs. In the last four years, there has been little change in transfer destination.
- ▶ Fewer than 1 in 10 are "up-transfers" (transferring to a more prestigious program), while just over one quarter are "lateral-transfers," and nearly two-thirds are "down-transfers." This pattern has remained consistent over time.
- ▶ Of those men's basketball transfers remaining in Division I, nearly one third are so-called "graduate transfers." This percentage has remained relatively consistent over the last four years. Graduate transfers are more likely to "up-transfer" than undergraduate transfers in men's basketball.

Identifying 2018 Transfers in Division I Men's Basketball

- ▶ Transfers identified using the 2018 Division I Basketball Transfers list from the Verbal Commits [website](#), downloaded October 5, 2018.
- ▶ List destination accuracy determined primarily through:
 - ▶ 2018-19 men's basketball roster of transfer institution, and/or student-athlete bio.
 - ▶ Secondary sources:
 - NJCAA National Letter of Intent Signee Database.
 - Official press releases from either/both institution(s).
 - Transfer student-athletes' Twitter feed or other social media footprint (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.).



Methods of Analyses

- ▶ To analyze the data, only Division I end-of-season transfers were included in the dataset. Cases removed:
 - ▶ Those who could not be found on a team at a new institution (n=65), and were therefore not Division I transfers.
 - ▶ Mid-season transfers (n=38). To identify these cases, we relied on team-issued press releases issued between 11/1/2017 and 2/1/2018 noting program departure as neither ESPN nor Verbal Commits tracked mid-season transfer during the 2018 season.
 - ▶ Those who competed on NCAA Division II teams in 2017-18 (n=25) and therefore were not Division I transfers.
 - ▶ “Walk-ons” at either their 2017-18 or 2018-19 Division I institution (n=10).
 - ▶ Those remaining on their 2017-18 team (n=2).
 - ▶ Those who medically retired (n=1) or those who are playing professionally (n=1).
- ▶ Destination coded and corrected (if necessary) by:
 - ▶ Division of new institution.
 - ▶ Graduate transfer status.
 - ▶ Transfer direction (see technical appendix for details).

846 (total on list, 10/5/2018)

- 65 without a destination
- 38 mid-season transfers
- 25 Division II SAs
- 10 walk-ons
- 2 remained on 2017-18 team
- 1 medical retirement
- 1 playing professionally

704 confirmed transfers

Men's Basketball Transfers by the Numbers

- ▶ From 2017 to 2018 there was no substantial change in the number of transfers in Division I men's basketball. In 2017, there were 689 transfers (12.6% of all Division I men's basketball student-athletes). In 2018, there were 704 (12.7%).



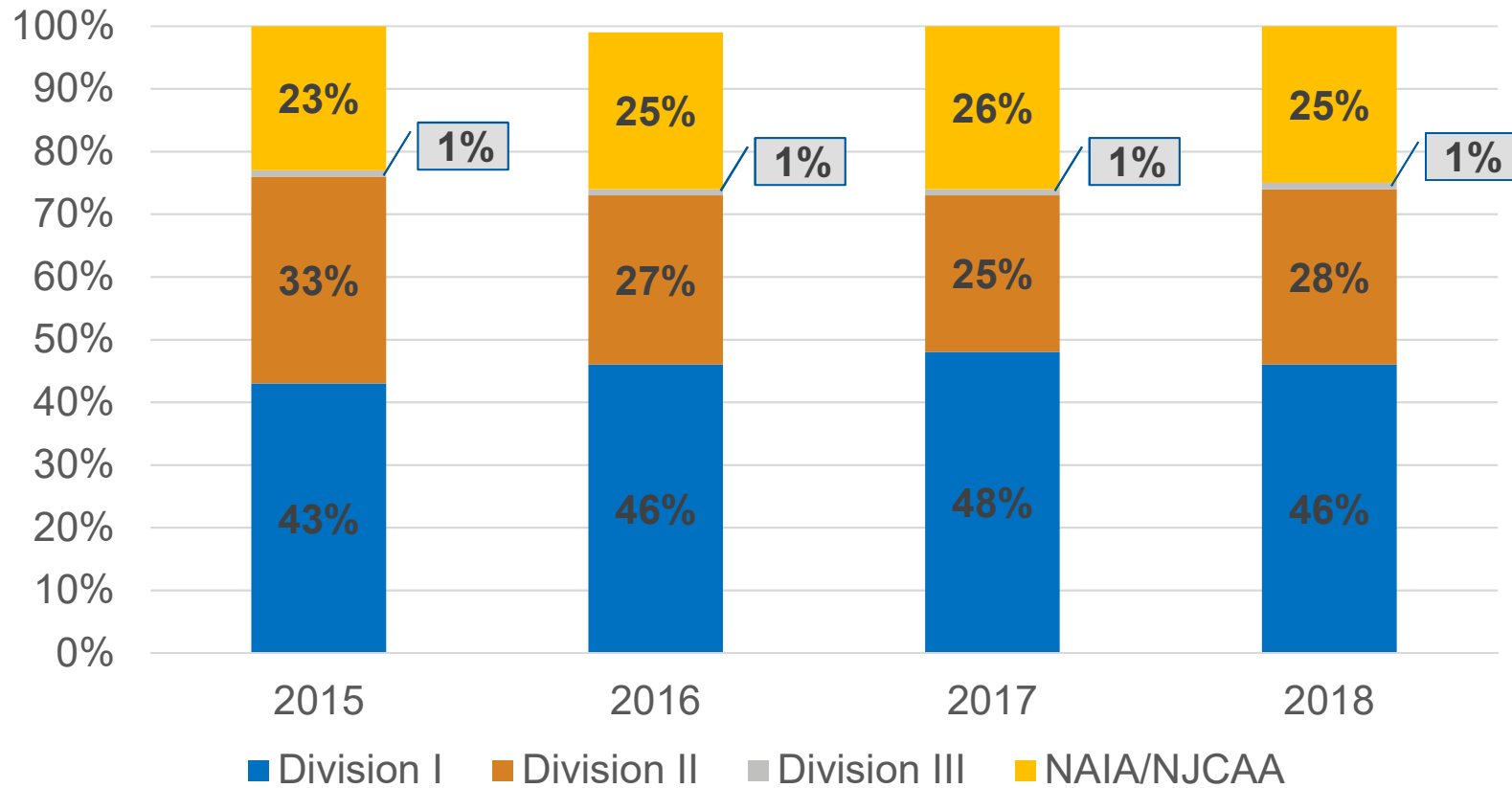
Number of Transfer Departures Per Division I Team

	2017	2018
0 Transfers	55	59
1 Transfer	96	94
2 Transfers	86	78
3 Transfers	60	55
4 Transfers	25	43
5 of more Transfers	25	22

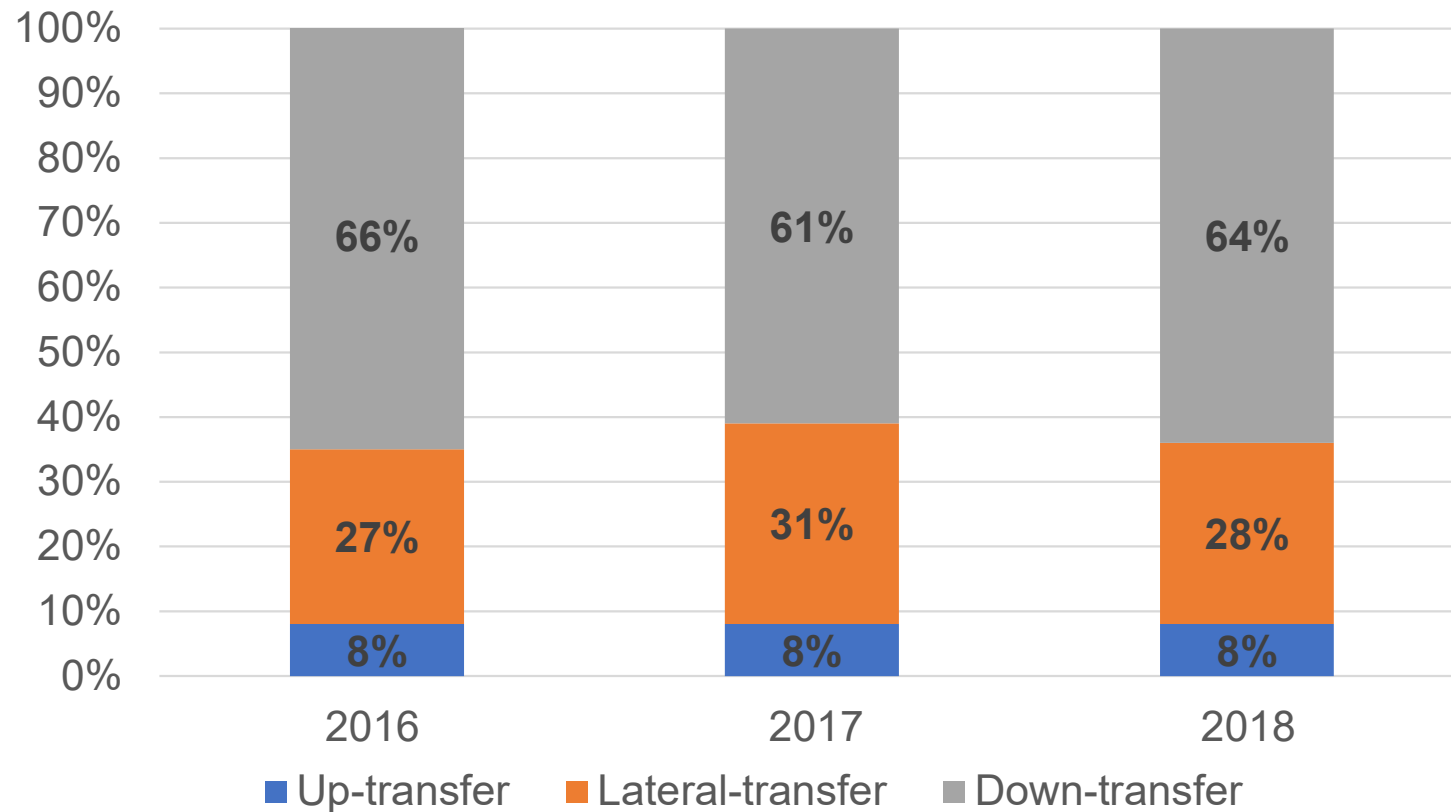
Note: 2018 numbers based on the 704 confirmed transfers, as of 11/16/18.



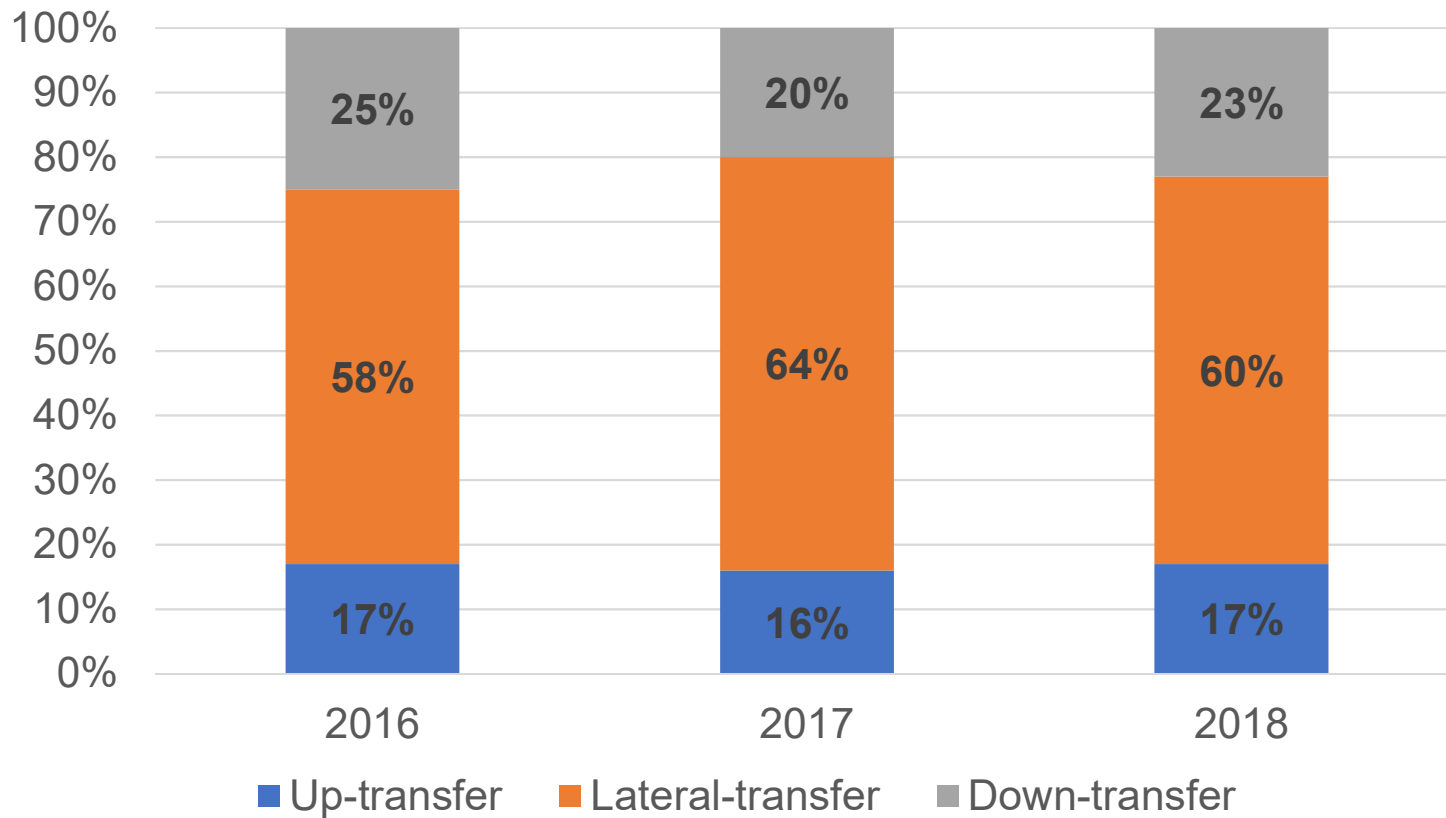
Transfer Destination by Division



Directional Movement of Transfers



Directional Movement of Transfers Remaining in Division I

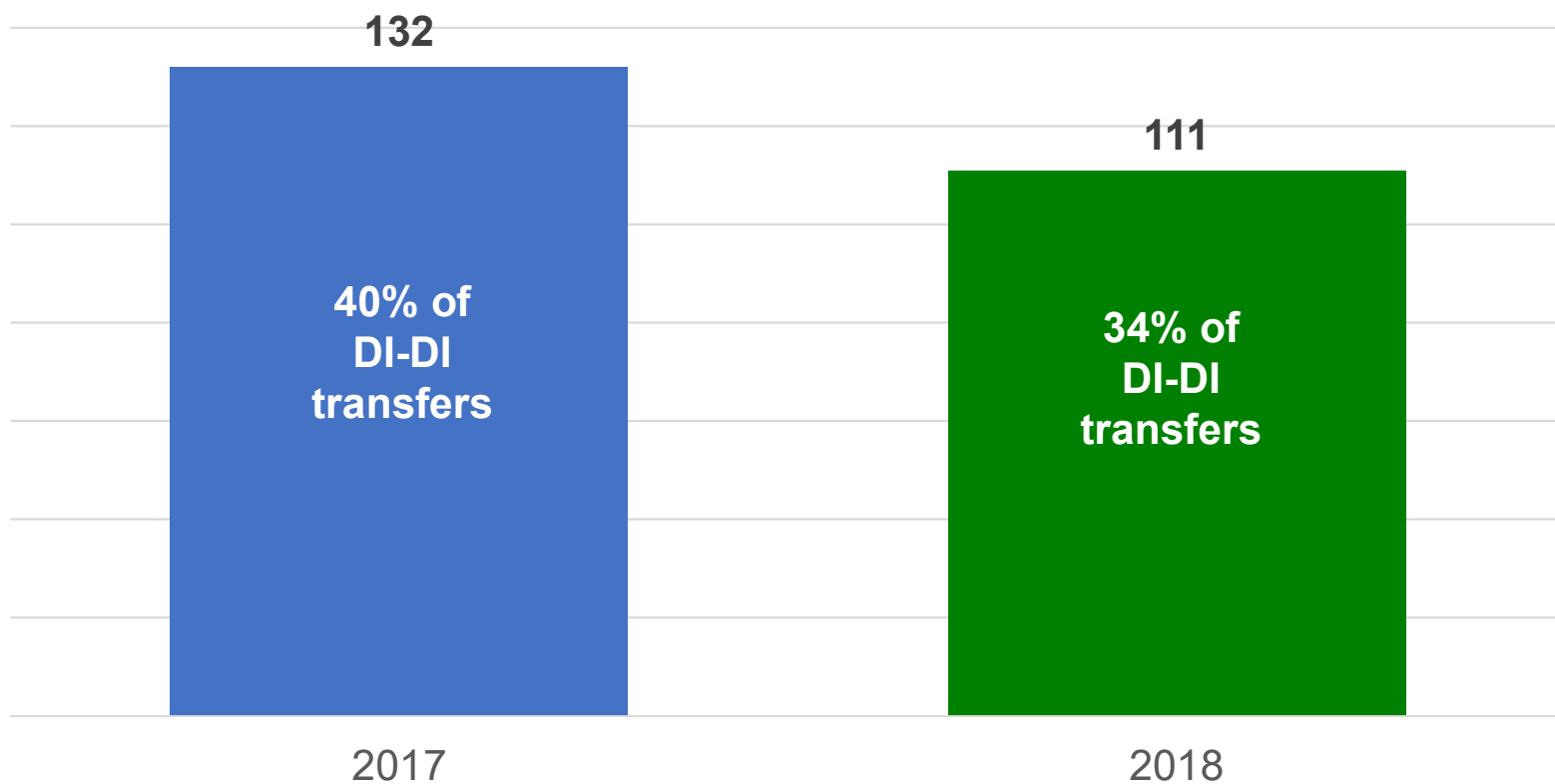


Pathways of Graduate Transfers

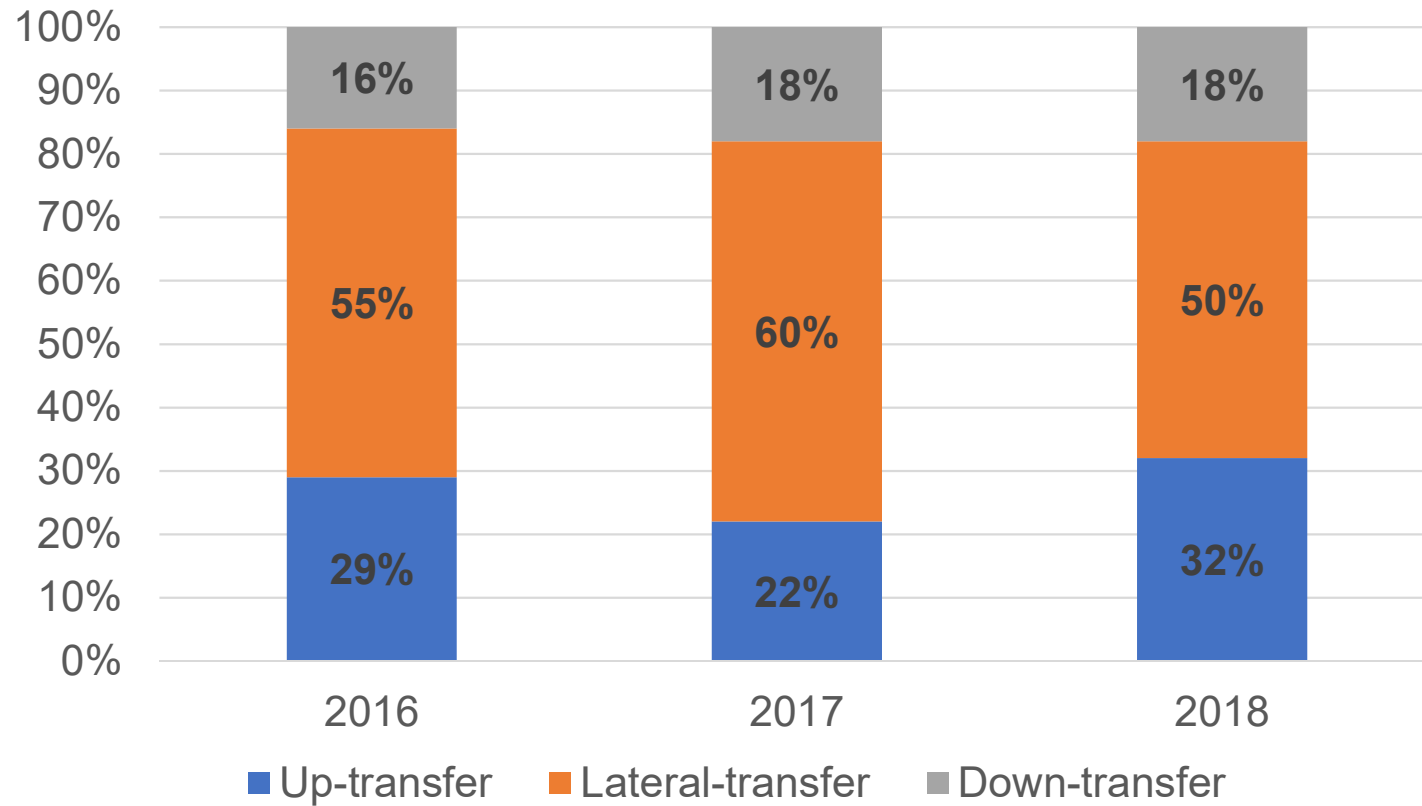
- ▶ In total, 111 Division I “graduate transfers” were identified (walk-ons excluded) among the 2018 end-of-season transfers. This is fewer than identified in 2017 (n=132).
- ▶ 2017-18 and 2018-19 graduate transfer figures are considered draft until academic data for that year are obtained in spring 2019 and spring 2020, respectively.



Change in Number of Graduate Transfers in Division I Men's Basketball



Directional Movement of Division I Graduate Transfers



Detailed Methods

- ▶ NCAA Research has tracked Division I Men's Basketball transfer movement since fall 2013. From 2013-2016, we relied on the Division I Men's Basketball transfer list compiled annually by Jeff Goodman at ESPN. When that list was discontinued, we relied on the Verbal Commits transfer list.
- ▶ The primary goal of this project has been to assess the transfer movement of Division I men's basketball student-athletes within and out of Division I, to track trends in so-called "graduate transfer," and to gain a better understanding of the prevalence of *up-transfer* (transferring to a more prestigious program) within Division I.
- ▶ When ESPN/Goodman originally compiled the list, mid-season transfers were on a separate list from end-of-season transfers. As such, we have only tracked the movement of these end-of-season transfers. Additionally, those who were Division I walk-ons at either the departing or receiving institution have been consistently excluded from the NCAA analyses. While walk-ons were annotated on ESPN lists, we have relied on press releases and media guides to identify them on the Verbal Commits lists.
- ▶ The Verbal Commits website does not specifically list graduate transfers in their database. To identify these student-athletes on the 2018 end-of-season transfer list, we cross-referenced the list of Division I to Division I transfers with [The Grad Transfer Tracker](#) list. Additionally, using the seniors identified on the Verbal Commits list, we examined press releases, bios and box scores from the start of the 2018-19 regular season to identify graduate transfers among the Division I to Division I population.



Technical Appendix

Determining Transfer Direction (NCAA modification of term defined by Luke Winn, *Sports Illustrated*, 2012):

▶ **Up-Transfer**

- ▶ Transferring from a non-autonomy conference to a “major” basketball conference program (ACC, Big East, Big Ten, Big 12, Pac-12 or SEC) .
- ▶ Transferring from a non- “major” conference program to a perennial power outside the “major” conferences (Gonzaga, Wichita State or Villanova).
- ▶ Transferring from any Division I team that has NOT won a national championship in the last 10 years to a program that won a national championship in the past 10 years (UNC, Villanova, Duke, UConn, Louisville, Kentucky).

▶ **Lateral-Transfer**

- ▶ Transferring from a “major” conference program that has NOT won a national championship in last 10 years to a perennial power.
- ▶ Transferring from a “major” conference program to another “major” conference program that has NOT won a national championship in last 10 years.
- ▶ Transferring from a non- “major” conference program to another non “major” conference program that is NOT a perennial power.

▶ **Down-Transfer**

- ▶ Transferring from a “major” conference program to a non- “major” conference program that is NOT a perennial power.
- ▶ Transferring from a perennial power to a non- “major” conference program.
- ▶ Transferring from a program that won a national championship in the past 10 years to program that has not done so.
- ▶ Transferring out of Division I to Division II, Division III, NAIA, NJCAA, etc.





Research

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