inflation. D1-A football coaches scored slightly less, with a median compensation increase of 93 percent. But even coaches in so-called “minor sports” such as cross country, track, golf, soccer, and tennis racked up increases in their compensation packages that far exceeded those earned by full professors across all four institutional types. The lowest-scoring coaches, in cross country and track at D1-AA universities, saw their real compensation increase by 9 percent over these six years, which is more than double the 4 percent increase earned by the median full professors at doctoral universities. In contrast to the coaches, full professors at associate’s degree colleges actually experienced a loss in their compensation of 5 percent between 2005–06 and 2011–12.

Some have argued that reported head coach salaries, particularly in revenue-generating sports, overstate the financial impact of those expenditures on college and university budgets because private foundations or other sources of restricted donations are used to pay some or all of the head coach’s compensation. Indeed, in its annual report on the pay of head football coaches in D1-A, USA Today notes that the category of “school pay” includes base salary as well as income paid by other sources, such as a foundation, and payments in return for use of specific brands of shoes or apparel, media appearances, and personal appearances. However, school pay is guaranteed by the university employer, so the university is obligated to make up the difference if there are shortfalls in these third-party payments. For almost all D1-A head football coaches, “other pay” (anything not guaranteed by the university) makes up a tiny proportion of their total salary. Of the 124 coaches listed in the USA Today 2013 salary report, only twenty-eight received any “other pay.” And for all but three of these coaches, other pay accounted for less than 4 percent of their school pay.17

Even in cases where a head coach in a revenue-generating sport is paid out of an endowed fund, multiple assistant coaches may receive six-figure salaries paid out of general

Note: For coaches, compensation is the median salary and benefits expenditures for head coaches of men’s sports, in constant dollars. The sports represented here are a selection of “revenue generating” sports (for example, basketball and football) and other sports that had high participation rates. For full professors, the calculation uses the median in the institutional distribution for compensation, which is average salary plus the average institutional expenditure on benefits, in constant dollars.