

## DePauw Athletics

WHITE PAPER NO. 1

### *A White Paper concerning DePauw's Athletic Conference Switch*

As DePauw embarks on a promising journey to define our institutional identity, we believe it is vital to address to totality of the student experience. Productive conversations are under way about the intellectual and social identity of the university and we would be remiss not to address the future of DePauw athletics as part of who we are. We believe a strong athletic tradition is one of the defining characteristics of DePauw and should remain at the forefront of our institutional identity in the future.

In August of this year, DePauw announced its intention to leave the Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference and join the Northern Coast Athletic Conference beginning in 2011-2012. We believe this to be a step forward for DePauw Athletics for the several reasons, including:

1. **Geographic proximity.** The SCAC is made up primarily of colleges in the South, with the bulk coming from Texas. DePauw teams routinely travel extremely long distances to play in-conference games. Centre College in Danville, KY is the closest SCAC school to DePauw and it is over four hours away. By comparison, NCAC schools are mostly concentrated in Ohio and Indiana, which will reduce travel time and boost fan attendance at away games. With the majority of DePauw's students hailing from Midwestern states, our membership in a Midwestern conference will encourage more students, parents and alumni to support the Tigers at away games. The higher percent of teams nearby will help reduce our carbon-footprint. By shortening the teams' trips, the bus trips will undeniably produce fewer emissions.
2. **Financial sustainability.** While no detailed comparison is yet available about the cost differential, membership in the SCAC required DePauw to spend a great deal of money covering travel and lodging expenses for away games in Texas, Alabama, and Colorado. Considering the financial strain the crash of 2008 placed on DePauw, we believe the athletic conference switch to be a fiscally responsible change that will equip DePauw Athletics to compete long-term in a financially sustainable manner.
3. **Institutional identity.** Beyond their Midwestern location, the NCAC schools are all residential liberal arts colleges with strong academic traditions. Every NCAC the schools have between 2,000 and 2,500 total students and seven of the nine current liberal-arts colleges in the NCAC are members with DePauw University in the Great Lakes Colleges Association (GLCA). This congruency not only gives DePauw athletes the chance to

37 compete against our natural rivals, it will raise DePauw's profile and reputation in  
38 comparison to those schools. We believe this added publicity will, over time, allow  
39 DePauw to recruit a greater share of the best-qualified students and most gifted athletes in  
40 the area.

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42 While we believe the NCAC switch represents a positive development, we urge the  
43 Administration and Athletic Department to think of new ways to maximize the athletic  
44 experience at DePauw for student athletes, fans, and the community at large. By focusing on the  
45 following things, we believe the future of DePauw athletics can be even brighter and more  
46 successful than our past.

47 1. **Develop new rivalries.** Although DePauw has a longstanding football rivalry with  
48 Wabash, the new conference schedule should provide ample opportunity to develop new  
49 rivalries with some of Division III's most successful athletic departments. For example,  
50 adding DePauw to Kenyon and Denison will give the NCAC three of the top fifteen  
51 men's swimming teams in Division III. Varsity teams and the Athletic Department  
52 should seize upon this new competition and advertise rivalry games more effectively.  
53 We encourage DePauw to provide buses for students to travel to nearby away games. By  
54 providing this transportation, students will be more involved with athletics, thus  
55 increasing the spirit of rivalries.

56 2. **Emphasize conference identity.** Since DePauw will now play its natural rivals, we  
57 encourage the Athletic Department to wholeheartedly embrace our new conference  
58 identity and publicize it accordingly. Conference identity is about much more than a new  
59 set of banners in Lilly (although, we will need those too), it is about inspiring competition  
60 among coaches, athletes and fans. DePauw should make it a public goal to win the  
61 NCAC every year in every sport and celebrate our success appropriately. In several  
62 sports, the NCAC allows the top seeded school to host the conference tournament at the  
63 end of each season. Therefore, DePauw could potentially host several NCAC  
64 Championships in a given year, something that was a logistical impossibility in the  
65 SCAC. The prospect of home field advantage in the conference tournament is surely  
66 exciting for athletes, but also fans, family members and the DePauw community at large.

67 3. **Maintain success on and off the field.** One of the defining characteristics of DePauw  
68 athletics is our consistent success in wide range of sports. DePauw has won the SCAC  
69 President's Trophy (all-sports trophy) for five consecutive years and six times in eleven  
70 years of conference play. We firmly believe that *every* DePauw athletic team should be

71 nationally competitive *every* year. DePauw should avoid the temptation to develop one or  
72 two marquee programs at the expense of others and continue to strive for dominance in  
73 every sport. Furthermore, DePauw student athletes are some the best students and leaders  
74 on campus. We hope that future generations of student athletes will uphold this standard  
75 of success and that the Athletic Department will continue to encourage a diverse and  
76 enriching college experience. We are confident that shorter travel times in the NCAC will  
77 give student athletes more time to study, get involved and socialize. These shorter trips  
78 will also help DePauw take another stride in its constant attempt to become more  
79 environmentally friendly.

80  
81 Motion by: Marcus Gray                      Seconded by: Stefani Cleaver

82  
83 Aye   46  

84  
85 Nay   0  

86  
87 Abstain   0  

PASSED

88  
89 **This 31st day of October, 2010.**

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SIGNED COPY ON FILE IN STUDENT GOVERNMENT OFFICE

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Christine Walker, President

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95 Attest:

96 SIGNED COPY ON FILE IN STUDENT GOVERNMENT OFFICE

97 Tyler Hess, Secretary

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