# Going the Distance:

# How Far We Travel in Search of Higher Education

# A Proposal

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## Abstract

People travel near and far to go to university. Students choose the school they attend based on many factors, some of which include: major programs, campus resources, location, family ties & legacies, cost of tuition, student population & demographics, etc.. When a student embarks on the journey for higher education, they may travel a few blocks or a few thousand miles to be close to campus. Regardless of the reason, newly admitted students travel and there is a large market created for the business of moving. I plan to create a map that shows the movement of college students across towns and countries in an attempt to show the demographic market for ‘the big move’.

## Introduction

In this project I will use GIS to study the geography of distance traveled for higher education attendance. The spatial distribution of this topic is interesting because it will show the literal lengths people will go to attend the institution of their choosing.

## Research Question or Purpose of Project

A visual study of the ‘back-to-school’ market phenomenon focused on the college move. Distances traveled. Industry. Consumerism.

## Maps and Analyses



## Data Sources

* Public and private universities conduct surveys of their accepted students, both ones who choose to attend and those who decline.
* Student college sites like collegeboard.com
* Possibly census data to show current residence and past residence of student populations.

## Exemplars

I find the Facebook “friending” map (above) very intriguing in that the map conveys movement. There is a large industry created around the ‘back-to-school’ rush every fall in the United States, as well as a more focused market targeting college students and their parents.

I think we could do a neat set of maps along these lines using Mills data. States of origin when students started and where are alums now.

## Time Line

18 October – finalize thesis and goal for the project.

25 October – gather resources.

1 November – compile data

8 November – work on map

15 November – review data & map, make edits as necessary.

22 November – create and practice presentation outline & make final edits, peer review.

29 November Presentations

6 December Presentations

## References

# Student Choice of College: How Far Do Students Go For An Education?

# <http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3955/is_200904/ai_n31666009/>

1. CollegeBoard “Trends”
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2. <http://planning.ucsc.edu/irps/Enrollmt/CCHOICE/CollCh07.pdf>
3. http://professionals.collegeboard.com/data-reports-research/trends/studentpoll/millennial/college-choice