

# Characterizing the Boston Mechanism

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## Abstract

This paper characterizes the Boston school choice mechanism using compact axioms along the following lines. First, a mechanism respects preference rankings and is weakly fair if and only if it is the Boston mechanism. Second, weak respect of preference rankings, efficiency, and weak fairness are sufficient to characterize the Boston mechanism. Third, a mechanism satisfies consistency, mutual best, and weak respect of preference rankings if and only if it is the Boston mechanism. Fourth, consistency and respect of top rankings are sufficient to characterize the Boston mechanism. Finally, this mechanism is characterized by double-standard stability, which explains its wide prevalence.

**Keywords:** Boston mechanism; Respect of preference rankings; Weak stability; Respect of top rankings; Double-standard stability

**JEL classification:** C78; D78; I21

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