

Office of Budget and Planning

Business Practice: Selection of Peer Institutions

The office is frequently asked to prepare reports and statistics that compare U-M against “peer” institutions. Comparisons can include business practices, specific metrics, outcomes, or other measures. The Provost’s Office has requested consistency in the list of institutions included as peers in reporting.

This business practice establishes the selection method for peers based on the purpose of the comparison. There are two primary options for peer comparison groups:

- *Benchmarking Peers* – See Appendix A
- *AAU Peers* – See Appendix B

The “benchmarking peers” group is the default for all comparisons. However, there may be situations where a larger set of institutions is required for meaningful comparisons. For example, this can happen when comparing state appropriations across institutions. Using the benchmarking peer list in this situation would mean comparing only nine public institutions and the comparison of U-M to these nine might not provide the intended message. Additional examples for use of the “AAU peers” are listed later.

Benchmarking Peers

The benchmarking peer list is based on the list of top institutions identified during the development of the faculty recruitment, retention, and departure report for the Provost’s Office. Each summer, the deans are asked to report on senior faculty recruitment, retention, and departure activity for their unit, including which institutions hire our faculty (or attempt to) or are the source of faculty new to the University of Michigan. Compilation of this information produces a list of the “top” institutions for this faculty activity.

The baseline benchmarking peer list was established in 2014-15. Institutions that appear on this list can vary each year depending on the results of the faculty recruitment, retention, and departure report. In order to stabilize the list, the following rules apply for adding or removing an institution from the list:

- 1) The benchmarking peer list will be reviewed every three years
- 2) If a new institution appears as a top institution in the faculty recruitment, retention, and departure report for three consecutive years, then it will be added to the benchmarking peer list
- 3) If an existing institution has dropped off as a top institution in the faculty recruitment, retention, and departure report for three consecutive years, then it will be removed from the list.

- 4) In addition, there may be requests from leadership or specific Regents to add a benchmarking peer not identified through the faculty recruitment, retention, and departure report. These will be added as requested and left on the list until the next review cycle where confirmation will be requested from leadership.

Examples:

| Institution | 2014-15 Peer List Status | 2015-16 Faculty List Status | 2016-17 Faculty List Status | 2017-18 Faculty List Status | 2017-18 Peer List Action |
|-------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| U Wisconsin | On list | Off list | Off list | Off list | Remove |
| New York U | On list | Off list | On list | Off list | Stay |
| UC – SF | Not on List | On list | On list | On list | Add |

Association of American Universities (AAU) Peers

U-M is a member of the AAU, an association of leading research universities. AAU focuses on issues that are important to research-intensive universities, such as funding for research, research policy issues, and graduate and undergraduate education.

The AAU peer list should be used when a larger set of institutions are required to adequately compare. Examples of these situations can include:

- *State appropriations comparisons*
- *Ad hoc requests to AAUDE listserv where responses could come from a limited number of institutions*
- *Salary or compensation studies where the “n” of the study is critical to the interpretation*
 - *Faculty salary by CIP*
 - *Faculty salary and fringe benefits by rank (as reported to AAUP)*
 - *Administrative salaries (Dean and high level executive officers)*
 - *Provost’s periodic gender salary equity studies*
 - *Graduate assistant stipends*
- *Other surveys where responses could come from a limited number of institutions*
 - *Undergraduate and doctoral time to degree and completions*
 - *Retention/graduation survey*

Other Situations

There are several individual and specific situations where using an alternative comparative group of institutions is necessary. These alternative comparison groups are listed below along with the situations necessitating their use.

- Michigan public universities
 - State of Michigan appropriations process
 - Tuition comparisons
 - Other state policy matters
- Universities in which U-M competes for undergraduate students

Identification of this group of institutions is completed when analyzing either admitted students that did not matriculate or when considering student responses to the SOFA survey, whichever is most recent.

 - Where Did They Go? reporting
 - SOFA survey administration
- Carnegie Classification Peers: Highest Research
 - State of Michigan Performance Measures
- Ad hoc comparisons

Certain situations require a unique group of institutions that is based on school or college or even a specific academic discipline. In these cases, the office will work with the requesting unit to determine the most appropriate comparison group specific to the study.

Impact of this business practice

The Almanac has used a slightly different list of peers than in the benchmarking peer list and labeled it as the university’s “Official Peers” list. In addition, there are cases in the Almanac where the Big 10 list is used for comparisons. All tables in the Almanac will be aligned with the peer benchmarking peer list.

The peer tuition comparison past practice has included a much larger list of institutions. The focus of the collection of peer tuition rates over the summer as they are approved will be on the benchmarking peers and Michigan public universities. However, as time permits, comparison data can be collected on the other institutions to record the data for historical purposes.

Document Action

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Revised: June 27, 2017 to add University of Virginia at the request of a Regent

APPENDIX A: Benchmarking Peers

| Proper name | Short Name | Public/Private | Undergraduate (Y/N) | Medical School (Y/N) | Hospital (Y/N) |
|--|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Columbia University | Columbia | Private | Y | Y | Y |
| Cornell University | Cornell | Private | Y | Y | Y |
| Harvard University | Harvard | Private | Y | Y | Y |
| Johns Hopkins University | Johns Hopkins | Private | Y | Y | Y |
| Massachusetts Institute of Technology | MIT | Private | Y | N | N |
| New York University | NYU | Private | Y | Y | Y |
| Northwestern University | Northwestern | Private | Y | Y | Y |
| Ohio State University | Ohio State | Public | Y | Y | Y |
| Stanford University | Stanford | Private | Y | Y | Y |
| University of California-Berkeley | UC-Berkeley | Public | Y | N | N |
| University of California-Los Angeles | UCLA | Public | Y | Y | Y |
| University of California-San Francisco | UC-San Francisco | Public | N | Y | Y |
| University of Chicago | Chicago | Private | Y | Y | Y |
| University of Illinois-Urbana/Champaign | U Illinois | Public | Y | Y | Y |
| University of Maryland-College Park | U Maryland | Public | Y | Y | Y |
| University of Michigan | U-M | Public | Y | Y | Y |
| University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill | U North Carolina | Public | Y | Y | Y |
| University of Pennsylvania | U Penn | Private | Y | Y | Y |
| University of Southern California | U Southern Cal | Private | Y | Y | Y |
| University of Texas-Austin | U Texas | Public | Y | Y | N |
| University of Virginia-Charlottesville | U Virginia | Public | Y | Y | Y |
| University of Washington-Seattle | U Washington | Public | Y | Y | Y |
| University of Wisconsin-Madison | U Wisconsin | Public | Y | Y | Y |
| Yale University | Yale | Private | Y | Y | Y |

APPENDIX B: AAU Peers

| Proper name | Short Name | Public/Private | Undergraduate (Y/N) | Medical School (Y/N) | Hospital (Y/N) |
|--|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Boston University | Boston U | Private | Y | Y | Y |
| Brandeis University | Brandeis | Private | Y | N | N |
| Brown University | Brown | Private | Y | Y | Y |
| California Institute of Technology | Cal Tech | Private | Y | N | N |
| Carnegie Mellon University | Carnegie Mellon | Private | Y | N | N |
| Case Western University | Case Western | Private | Y | Y | Y |
| Duke University | Duke | Private | Y | Y | Y |
| Emory University | Emory | Private | Y | Y | Y |
| Georgia Institute of Technology | Georgia Tech | Public | Y | N | N |
| Indiana University-Bloomington | Indiana U | Public | Y | Y | N |
| Iowa State University | Iowa State | Public | Y | N | N |
| Michigan State University | Mich State | Public | Y | Y | Y |
| Pennsylvania State University | Penn State | Public | Y | Y | N |
| Princeton University | Princeton | Private | Y | N | N |
| Purdue University | Purdue | Public | Y | N | N |
| Rice University | Rice | Private | Y | N | N |
| Rutgers University | Rutgers | Public | Y | Y | Y |
| State University of New York at Buffalo | SUNY-Buffalo | Public | Y | Y | Y |
| State University of New York-Stony Brook | SUNY-Stony Brook | Public | Y | Y | Y |
| Texas A&M University | Texas A&M | Public | Y | Y | Y |
| Tulane University | Tulane | Private | Y | Y | Y |
| University of Arizona | U Arizona | Public | Y | Y | Y |
| University of California-Davis | UC-Davis | Public | Y | Y | Y |
| University of California-Irvine | UC-Irvine | Public | Y | Y | Y |
| University of California-San Diego | UC-San Diego | Public | Y | Y | Y |
| University of California-Santa Barbara | UC-Santa Barbara | Public | Y | N | N |
| University of Colorado-Boulder* | U Colorado | Public | Y | Y | N |
| University of Florida | U Florida | Public | Y | Y | Y |
| University of Iowa | U Iowa | Public | Y | Y | Y |
| University of Kansas | U Kansas | Public | Y | Y | Y |
| University of Michigan | U-M | Public | Y | Y | Y |
| University of Minnesota-Twin Cities | U Minnesota | Public | Y | Y | Y |
| University of Missouri-Columbia | U Missouri | Public | Y | Y | Y |
| University of Oregon | U Oregon | Public | Y | N | N |
| University of Pittsburgh | Pitt | Public | Y | Y | Y |
| University of Rochester | U Rochester | Private | Y | Y | Y |
| Vanderbilt University | Vanderbilt | Private | Y | Y | Y |
| Washington University | Washington U | Private | Y | Y | Y |