



University of Alaska Peer Groups

Peer comparisons are useful in establishing how well the University of Alaska or its campuses compare on given measures to institutions of like size, mission, and organization. Peer comparisons are also useful in targeting best practices. Statewide Budget and Institutional Research prepares and utilizes several peer groups for comparison studies. The appropriate peer group is chosen depending on the particular study and information requested. Peer analyses are intended to allow for uniform and consistent comparisons among institutions. However, definitional and reporting differences often exist between universities. As a result, the analyses are most useful for examining aggregate relationships, averages, or trends in the data rather than distinct and specific values in any one category. Peer groups will be presented in three categories: student enrollment (FTE)/resource allocation tasking peers, faculty salary peers, and competitive peers.

Statewide Budget and Institutional Research most commonly uses the **Public University Systems** peer group. The public higher education systems selected for this peer group cover the broad mission spectrum of community college through Ph.D. instruction to include significant research. Peer financial information can be found through the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) using definitions consistent with annual financial statement presentation for all universities with students receiving federal financial aid. From this information, the University of Alaska (UA) can be compared to other public university systems in several common expenditure and revenue categories. However, in any one category definitional or reporting differences may exist among peer institutions. Using these criteria UA can be compared to 17 public higher education systems. This group is further subdivided by student enrollment: student FTE under 30,000, between 30,000 and 60,000, and student FTE over 60,000. UA has a student FTE of approximately 16,600.

Student Enrollment/Resource Allocation Peers

Student FTE Under 30,000

- *Montana University System*
- *Southern Illinois University*
- *University of Maine*

Student FTE between 30,000 and 60,000

- Idaho State Board of Education
- University of Colorado
- University of Hawaii
- University of Houston
- University of Iowa
- University of Massachusetts
- University of Missouri
- University of Nebraska

Student FTE Over 60,000

- University of Oregon
- State University of Florida
- University and Community College System of Nevada
- University of Louisiana System
- University of North Carolina
- University of Texas System
- University of Wisconsin System
- University System of Maryland
- Utah System of Higher Education

Just as UA system peer groups allow for comparison with other systems, **major administrative units (MAU) peer groups** are used to offer informational inquiry at the MAU and main campus level. For example, one may be curious how UAF faculty and staff levels compare to its peers. Using the peer group list for the UA system would not provide a reasonable comparison. As a result, each MAU has a set of peer campuses that are of similar size, mission, Carnegie classification, and program breadth. Community characteristics such as population and urbanization are also considered. Depending on the analyses, some peers may be excluded because of lack of data. Also, for narrowing or expediting a given analysis a subset of the peer groups may be chosen. The table below lists all peer groups for the three UA MAU's.

MAU Peer Groups

UA Anchorage

University of Arkansas Little Rock
University of West Florida
University of Southern Maine
University of Missouri-St Louis
University of North Carolina at
Charlotte
Weber State University
Boise State University
University of Nevada-Las Vegas
Portland State University
Wichita Ste University
Cleveland State University
Youngstown State University
University of Central Oklahoma
Western Washington University

UA Fairbanks

University of Delaware
Kansas State University
University of Missouri-Rolla
University of Maine
Montana State University-Bozeman
University of Montana-Missoula
Cornell University - NY State
Statutory Colleges
SUNY at Binghamton
SUNY at Stony Brook
Utah State University
Georgia Institute of Technology
Main Campus
Idaho State University
University of Idaho
University of Nevada-Reno
North Dakota State University
Main Campus
Oregon State University
Michigan Technological University
University of Oklahoma Norman
Clemson University
University of Wyoming

UA Southeast

Adams State College
University of Maine at Machias
University of Maine at Presque Isle
Montana State University-Northern
SUNY College at Purchase
The University of Texas of the
Permian Basin
Georgia Southwestern State
University
University of Minnesota-Morris
Coastal Carolina Community
College
Eastern Oregon State College
Central Washington University
Eastern Washington University
Kennesaw State University
Lewis-Clark State College
Bemidji State University
Averett College
Longwood College
Western Oregon State College

In 2003 the Vice President for Faculty and Staff Relations requested MAU peer lists for faculty salary comparison studies. The following lists were provided by the MAU's to the Vice President for Faculty and Staff Relations.

UA MAU Peers for Faculty Salary Comparisons

UA Anchorage

Boise State University
Columbus State University
Indiana University-Purdue-Ft Wayne
Lamar University
Northern Kentucky University
Southern Connecticut State Un
University of Central Oklahoma
University of Michigan-Dearborn
University of Nebraska-Omaha
University of NC-Charlotte
University of Southern Maine
University of West Florida
Weber State University
Western Washington University
Youngstown State University

UA Fairbanks

Idaho State UN-Pocatello
Michigan Technological Un
Montana State UN-Bozeman
NM Institute of Mining & Tech
North Dakota State UN-Fargo
Northern Arizona University
Portland State University
University of Akron
University of Arkansas-Little Rock
University of Missouri-Rolla
University of Montana-Missoula
University of Nevada-Las Vegas
UN of North Dakota-Grand Forks
Wichita State University

UA Southeast

Adams State College
Bemidji State University
Black Hills State University
Central Washington University
Eastern Oregon University
Eastern Washington University
Georgia South West State College
Lewis & Clark State College
Montana State UN-Billings
Montana State University Northern
Northern State University
Southern Oregon University
Southern Utah University
University of Hawaii-Hilo
University of Maine-Presque Isle
University of Minnesota Morris
UN of Wisconsin-Green Bay
Western Oregon University

Alaska has the highest gross population migration rate after Nevada and the District of Columbia (DOL 1999 Alaska Population Overview). During 2002, Alaska was the second highest exporter of high school graduates going to college out of state after Vermont. Increasing the number of Alaska high school graduates that choose to remain in Alaska and obtain their higher education from the University of Alaska is a goal of UA as stated in the UA performance measures. Forty-five percent of Alaska high school graduates that go to college out of state attended competitive institutions in Washington, Oregon, Colorado, and Arizona. The seven institutions that attracted the most Alaska high school graduates in 2002 were identified as UA's competitive peers.

UA Competitive Peers

University of Idaho
Eastern Washington University
University of Nevada Reno
University of Nevada Las Vegas

Montana State University Bozeman
Colorado State University
University of Oregon

At times Statewide Budget and Institutional Research uses unique peer groups for specific studies. These include the following:

- Western states comparison – Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming. These states face some of the same challenges that Alaska does in terms of distance, rural access, and economy. UA's breadth of degree offerings has been compared to those of all public institutions within these states.
- Less Selective Institutions – The Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange collects and disseminates student retention data for participating institutions - a program UA has participated in since inception. The Less Selective Institutions are those participating institutions that have open or liberal admission policies and have a high proportion of part-time students. This peer group is often used to compare retention and graduation rates.