Leveraging Data Visualization to Enhance Benchmarking Reports

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What is benchmarking?

• Benchmarking compares an institution’s organizational activities and key performance indicators with those of other institutions in order to provide context and gauge outcomes.

• Typically includes a combination of data collection, statistical analysis, and subjective judgment.
Benchmarking attempts to answer the following questions

1. How well are we doing compared to others?
2. How good do we want to be?
3. Who is doing it the best (i.e., value-added)?
4. How do they do it?
5. How can we adapt what they do to our institution?
6. How can we be better than the best?
Who are your peer institutions?

Peer – similar role, scope, mission

“The success or failure of inter-institutional comparisons hinges upon the process of selecting peer institutions. This can be one of the most political processes with which the institutional researcher will have to deal”.

(Teeter and Brinkman in *The Primer for Institutional Research*)
Benchmarking requirements

Standard 2, CFR 2.10
“The institution disaggregates data according to racial, ethnic, gender, age, economic status, disability, and other categories, as appropriate. The institution benchmarks its retention and graduation rates against its own aspirations as well as the rates of peer institutions.”

Standard 4, CFR 4.6
The institution periodically engages its multiple constituencies, including the governing board, faculty, staff, and others, in institutional reflection and planning processes that are based on the examination of data and evidence. These processes assess the institution’s strategic position, articulate priorities, examine the alignment of its purposes, core functions, and resources, and define the future direction of the institution.
1. Key performance indicators (KPIs) used increasingly in college rankings, accreditation reports, national accountability systems, and state-support funding formulas for public colleges.

2. Proliferation of public databases designed to increase transparency and report school performance (i.e., IPEDS, College Scorecard, Voluntary System of Accountability, The Opportunity Insights Project).
Examples of benchmarking data sources

IPEDS

College Affordability and Transparency Center

College Scorecard

Federal Student Aid

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OPPORTUNITY INSIGHTS

WASC Senior College and University Commission
The newly redesigned College Scorecard (2019)
Institutional Research

The Institutional Research Office – a unit of the Office of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs – produces both descriptive statistics and inferential analysis to support evaluation of university operations for executive management, campus divisions, and university constituents. The office is the campus source for reporting enrollments and student demographics, producing the Common Data Set (CDS) to support higher education surveys, conducting in-depth research on student success, and providing data for accreditation and other accountability and improvement activities.

New Reports Recently Added:

- How “good” are your college’s retention and graduation rates? There’s an IRO dashboard for that. (February 2020)
- Check out Data UH’s VizBuilder for Hawaii! (November 2019)
### Actual vs. Predicted Retention Rates

#### Carnegie Classification | Peer School | Enrollment (2018) | Sector | Search Institution
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---
All | All | All | All | All

**Institution Name** | **Web Link** | **Actual Retention Rate, 3-Yr Avg** | **Predicted Retention Rate, 3-Yr Avg** | **Actual vs. Predicted Retention Rate** | **SE Predicted**
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | ---
Abilene Christian University | | 77.3% | 82.1% | -4.8% | 0.45
Adams State University | | 50.7% | 66.6% | -15.9% | 0.56
Adelphi University | | 82.3% | 84.6% | -2.3% | 0.39
Adrian College | | 68.0% | 72.5% | -4.5% | 0.41
AdventHealth University | | 67.7% | 67.2% | 0.5% | 0.75
Alabama A & M University | | 58.3% | 64.1% | -5.8% | 0.79
Alabama State University | | 60.7% | 61.3% | -0.6% | 0.80
Alaska Pacific University | | 61.7% | 68.6% | -6.9% | 0.48
Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences | | 83.3% | 84.0% | -0.7% | 0.46
Albertus Magnus College | | 69.0% | 63.3% | 5.7% | 0.73
Albion College | | 80.3% | 75.6% | 4.7% | 0.33
Alcorn State University | | 74.3% | 63.7% | 10.6% | 0.83
Alderson Broaddus University | | 55.7% | 65.2% | -9.5% | 0.49
Alfred University | | 73.0% | 73.7% | -0.7% | 0.39
Alice Lloyd College | | 76.3% | 64.4% | 11.9% | 0.55
Allegheny College | | 82.3% | 81.2% | 1.1% | 0.34
Alma College | | 80.3% | 79.4% | 0.9% | 0.42
Alvernia University | | 78.3% | 73.9% | 4.5% | 0.41

**Distribution of Actual Retention Rates**

- **Total No. of Institutions**: 1,227
- **Avg. Actual Retention %**: 76.8%
- **Avg. Predicted Retention %**: 76.8%
- **Actual vs. Predicted**: 0.0%

**Data Source**

IPEDS, U.S. Public/Private (not-for-profit) four-year and above U.S. institutions with complete data (N=1,227). Three-year average data are based on the 2015, 2016, and 2017 cohorts of First-Time, Full-Time Degree-Seeking Freshmen.
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Peer Institution Revision 2019

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Questions?

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https://westoahu.hawaii.edu/academics/institutional-research/