Program-Specific Peer Analyses for Instructional Costs and Productivity

NEAIR 2021 Virtual Annual Conference

Jen Snyder
HEC Manager

Marcia Preston
Research Analyst with HEC and The Cost Study at UD

Mollie Miller
Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness at Cincinnati State Technical and Community College

Shari Ellertson
Director of Institutional Research at Boise State University
Introduction to The Cost Study at UD
History of The Cost Study and HEC

• The Cost Study at the University of Delaware
  • National Study of Instructional Costs and Productivity
  • A leader in the analysis and benchmarking of program-level instructional costs and productivity since 1996
  • Available to all 4-year, non-profit colleges and Universities (U.S. and International)

• The Higher Education Consortia (HEC)
  • Established in 2015 to promote consortium relationships and research using Cost Study data
  • Based out of an Institutional Research office
History of The Cost Study and HEC

Who...
*T/TE, other regular, supplemental faculty, TAs*

...is teaching what to whom...
*Student credit hours, organized class sections, online, undergrad/grad*

And at what cost...
*Instructional, research, public service expense*
Context for examining *instructional expense* - longitudinal findings

Across all academic disciplines

Weighted average Direct Instructional Expenditures per Student Credit Hour

2000-2015
### Average Instructional Cost

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Cost (2015 dollars)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electrical Engineering</td>
<td>$434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>$375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical Engineering</td>
<td>$372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>$291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>$281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer/Info Sciences</td>
<td>$274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine/Studio Arts</td>
<td>$273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biz Admin/Mgmt/Operations</td>
<td>$263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>$261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>$248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>$221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>$218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poli Sci/Government</td>
<td>$215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>$199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>$186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comm/Media Studies</td>
<td>$185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>$181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>$176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td>$172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>$163</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The National Bureau of Economic Research

#### 2012 – 2015 Average Cost Per Student Credit Hour
(2015 dollars)

“Why Is Math Cheaper Than English? Understanding Cost Differences In Higher Education”
(2018 NBER Working Paper)
Types of Reports Available

• Institution Reports
• Comparative Reports
  • 3-year-averages
  • National Norms
National Norm Reporting

Institutional Carnegie Classification
Research (R1&R2), Doctorate/Professional (R3), Comprehensive (M1,M2,M3), Baccalaureate (B1,B2)

Highest Degree Awarded
Doctoral/Professional, Master's, Bachelor's, Non-Degree

Proportion of Undergraduate Degrees
0-24% UG, 25-49% UG, 50-74% UG, 75-100% UG
Types of Reports Available

• Institution Reports
• Comparative Reports
  • 3-year-averages
  • Norms
  • Peer analyses
  • Special data requests
What are Program-Specific Peers?
What institutional needs drove you to request a program-specific peer analysis?

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Boise State University</th>
<th>Miami University (OH)</th>
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</table>

![Boise State University Logo](image1)  
![Miami University Logo](image2)
Selecting Program-Specific Peers
Methods of selecting program-specific peer groups

Boise State University

Miami University (OH)
Benefits of Using a Program-Specific Approach

- Engaging department/college level administrators
- Unique Programs
  - Standard Peers don’t offer comparison
  - e.g., a small liberal arts school with an equine program
- When norms are not available for a specific CIP
- Interdisciplinary Programs: not easily represented by a single CIP
Unique Programs

Educational Psych. (42.28)

*Clinical, Counseling and Applied Psychology*

- Error Bars show standard deviation
- No values available from Standard Peer Group
- R1/R2 norms have high variability.
- Program-Specific Group is peers more similar to our example institution.
Norms not available for specific CIP

Commerce (52.0703)

Entrepreneurial and Small Business Operations (52.07)

- New program for our example institution in 2019
- Infrequently used CIP by other participating institutions
- No norms available (none of the norm groups meet the threshold of 5)
- Can use program-specific analysis to obtain a comparison
Interdisciplinary Programs:
e.g. Kinesiology and Health (31.05)

- 30.19 - Nutrition Sciences
- 31.05 - Sports, Kinesiology, and Physical Education/Fitness
- 51.22 - Public Health
How have the peer analyses been used thus far for decision-making?

Boise State University

Miami University (OH)
What’s Next from The Cost Study?

• Automated Program-Specific Peer Requests in the web portal
What does this type of research offer to our understanding of instructional costs and productivity at 4-year colleges and universities?

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![Boise State University Logo](image1.png)  
![Miami University Logo](image2.png)
Thank you for joining our session!

**Upcoming NEAIR Sessions with The Cost Study**

*Exhibitor Booth*
- Today, 3:15-4:30pm
- Wednesday, 11:45am-1:00pm

*The Cost Study Special Interest Group*
- Thursday 12-12:45pm

Mollie Miller, mollie6miller@gmail.com
Shari Ellertson, shariellertson@boisestate.edu

Marcia Preston, *The Cost Study Research Analyst*
Website: [ire.udel.edu/cost/](http://ire.udel.edu/cost/)
The Cost Study email address: ire-cost@udel.edu