The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education

Alexander C. McCormick
The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

OECD Workshop on Institutional Diversity
4 December 2006
The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

- An independent research and policy center established in 1905
- Charged to “do and perform all things necessary to encourage, uphold, and dignify the profession of the teacher and the cause of higher education.”
- Long history of influential studies and projects
Origins of the Classification

- **1970**: The Carnegie Commission on Higher Education creates a classification system to serve its research needs.
- **1973**: Classification published to assist research on higher education.
- **2005-06**: Major overhaul.

Clark Kerr
Original Design Principles

- Use empirical data about what institutions do
  - Secondary analysis of existing data
- Seek comparability with respect to:
  - Functions of the institutions
  - Characteristics of students and faculty
The First Published Carnegie Classification (1973)

Doctoral-Granting Institutions
- Research Universities I
- Research Universities II
- Doctoral Universities I
- Doctoral Universities II

Comprehensive Universities and Colleges
- Comprehensive Universities and Colleges I
- Comprehensive Universities and Colleges II

Liberal Arts Colleges
- Liberal Arts Colleges I
- Liberal Arts Colleges II

Two-Year Colleges and Institutes

Professional Schools and Other Specialized Institutions
- Theological seminaries, Bible colleges, and other institutions offering degrees in religion
- Medical schools and medical centers
- Other separate health professional schools
- Schools of engineering and technology
- Schools of business and management
- Schools of art, music, and design
- Schools of law
- Teachers colleges
- Other specialized institutions

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching
How Did the Carnegie Foundation Become the National Classifier?

- First sophisticated classification
- Origin with the Carnegie Commission
  - Objective
  - Widely respected & trusted
- Appeal of the original classification
  - Simplicity
  - Made intuitive sense
Evolution of Meanings and Uses: Hazards of Success

Classification as…
- identity
- marker of…
  - quality
  - prestige
  - market position
- object of strategic action

Institutionalization
- research
- resource allocation
- memberships & dues
- *U.S. News* rankings

Expectations of…
- precision
- holistic assessment
Hazards of Success

Dominance
Consequential uses
Classification sensitivity
Strategic action
Homogenization
Unintended Consequences

New Students and New Places
(Carnegie Commission, 1971)

- “We find no need whatsoever in the foreseeable future for any more research-type universities granting the Ph.D.”

- Recommendations included:
  - “preserving and even increasing the diversity of institutions of higher education by type and by program; resisting homogenization”
  - “holding steady the number of universities.”
2005-06 Overhaul

- Revised “Basic” classification
- Several new classifications
  - Instructional program (2)
  - Enrollment profile (2)
  - Size & setting
  - “Elective” classifications
- Online lookup & listing tools
Online Access & Tools

http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/classifications
Lookup & Listings

This Web site provides 3 options for querying the Classifications database.

**Standard Listings**
Generate a list of institutions organized by single Classification category.

**Custom Listings**
Generate a custom list of institutions by selecting a combination of classifications and categories, using OR logic within each classification and AND logic between them.

**Institution Lookup**
Find a particular institution by keyword or by generating a list of institutions organized by first letter.

All query results can be filtered by dimensions organized by control and accreditation, region/locale, and population served.

Please Note
All-inclusive classifications are time-specific snapshots of institutional attributes and behavior based on data from 2003 and 2004. Institutions might be classified differently using a different timeframe.

Classifications FAQs
Answers to questions you may have about the Carnegie Classifications.
**University of Illinois at Chicago**  
*Chicago, Illinois*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>4-year or above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Enrollment</td>
<td>24,865</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate Instructional Program</td>
<td>Bal/HGC: Balanced arts &amp; sciences/professions, high graduate coexistence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Instructional Program</td>
<td>CompDoc/Med Vet: Comprehensive doctoral with medical/veterinary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment Profile</td>
<td>MU: Majority undergraduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate Profile</td>
<td>FT4/S/HTI: Full-time four-year, selective, higher transfer-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size and Setting</td>
<td>L4/NR: Large four-year, primarily nonresidential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>RU/VH: Research Universities (very high research activity)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

To find similar institutions, check the dimensions of interest and click the 'find similar' button

For greater flexibility, use Custom Listings

---

**Footnotes**

Basic classification: bachelor's degree majors are within 5 percentage points of category boundary.
5 results for Basic = “RU/VH” and Graduate Instructional Program = “CompDoc/MedVet” and Size and Setting = “L4/NR” and Undergraduate Profile = “FT4/S/HTI”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oregon State University</td>
<td>Corvallis, Oregon</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Arizona</td>
<td>Tucson, Arizona</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Cincinnati-Main Campus</td>
<td>Cincinnati, Ohio</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Hawaii at Manoa</td>
<td>Honolulu, Hawaii</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Illinois at Chicago</td>
<td>Chicago, Illinois</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please Note
All-inclusive classifications are time-specific snapshots of institutional attributes and behavior based on data from 2003 and 2004. Institutions might be classified differently using a different timeframe.

Classifications FAQs
Answers to questions you may have about the Carnegie Classifications.
Implications

- Complexity
- Flexibility
  - More nuanced classification
  - Possibilities for customization
  - Better matching of classification to purpose
- Responsibility
  - Make & justify choices