

**Gallaudet Benchmark Project**  
Office of Institutional Research  
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**Defining Comparison Groups**

There are two general categories of external comparison groups: competitors and comparables.

**Competitor comparisons** for an educational institution are defined as those who potentially or actually draw students away from the target institution. In Gallaudet's case, the most likely institutions would be NTID and CSUN. Using a competitor analysis as the basis for defining a benchmark has both advantages and disadvantages. The drawbacks to using a competitor peer group for Gallaudet is that NTID and CSUN do not appeal to exactly the same student body as Gallaudet and both of these institutions publicly available information about its deaf students is reported inside the larger institution's data, thus making accessing the data problematic.

Another approach to establishing a comparison group is to first define a set of criteria and then look for **similar institutions**. This approach also has advantages and disadvantages.

In opting for the comparable institutions as the reference point, there are at least two possible categories for basing a comparison.

Functional Variables and  
Student Body Characteristics

Functional variables could be defined by  
Public or private 4 year and above  
Carnegie classification (Masters I)  
Similar size (less than 2000 students)

Student Body Characteristics could be defined by  
Admissions policy (Open)  
Percentage of minority group enrollment  
Average ACT score

**Generating the Benchmark Colleges**

**Functional Peers (Peer I)**

Functional Peers are 19 small colleges and universities around the United States. They enroll fewer than 2500 undergraduates and between 250 and 525 graduate students. They tend to be religious connected schools such as Alverno College in Milwaukee, Wisconsin (Catholic) or Oklahoma Christian University. They tend to have more white undergraduates than Gallaudet (70% to 61%); more women undergraduates (61% to 53%), and fewer women graduate students (69% to 78%). They are functionally similar because of their size and degree granting status (small MA-granting).

**Functionally Similar (n=19)**

Alverno College  
College of Mount Saint Vincent

Cornerstone University  
Holy Names University  
La Sierra University  
Lynchburg College  
Lynn University  
Malone College  
Mount St Mary's College  
Northwest Nazarene University  
Oklahoma Christian University  
Prescott College  
Regis College  
Saint Martin's University  
Salve Regina University  
University of Rio Grande  
University of Saint Francis-Ft Wayne  
Utica College  
Walsh University

### **Student Body Peers (Peer II)**

Student body peers are 11 small colleges around the United States with student bodies roughly similar to Gallaudet. Unlike the functional peers this group tends to be either private, non-religious or small state institutions with a percentage of minority students, ACT admissions scores, and an open admissions policy.

These institutions admit 68% of applicants versus 70% for Gallaudet. Their 25<sup>th</sup> percentile ACT score is 17 versus 14 for Gallaudet. Their 75<sup>th</sup> percentile ACT composite score is 23 versus 18 for Gallaudet. 59% of its undergraduates are females and 66% are white.

### **Similar Student Body (n=11)**

Belmont Abbey College  
Chestnut Hill College  
Franklin College  
Fresno Pacific University  
Louisiana College  
Pfeiffer University  
Reinhardt College  
Spalding University  
Texas Wesleyan University  
University of Dubuque  
Warner Southern College

### **Carnegie 2010 Peers (Peer III)**

In 2011-2012 OIR began a review of our peer institutions. Our goal was to utilize a common tool for selection of peers: the Carnegie classification. Our selection of Carnegie peers is based on the

[2010 Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education](#). The 2010 classification system has multiple parallel classifications to provide greater flexibility in selecting peers. For Gallaudet peers, a series of refining selections is done using both the basic framework and the "elective" classifications in the new Carnegie system. The following criteria were selected to yield ten Carnegie peer institutions:

- [Enrollment Profile](#) [HU] High Undergraduate
- [Undergraduate Profile](#) [FT4/I] Full-time four-year, inclusive
- [Size and Setting](#) [ [L4/HR] Small four-year, highly residential

**Carnegie 2010 Peers (n=6)**

Alcorn State University

Bay Path College

Eastern Nazarene College

Elizabeth City State College

Lincoln University of Pennsylvania

Clafin University