

Topic in Brief

UC Berkeley’s Standard Peer Comparison Group

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UC Berkeley’s standard set of peers consists of five public, five private and two other UC institutions. All are classified Doctoral Universities: Highest Research Activity and represent Berkeley’s major competitors.

The Office of Planning and Analysis, UC Berkeley’s institutional research office, uses a standard set of peer universities for most campus-level data comparisons. This group includes private, public and other University of California institutions.

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Consistently using a standard set of peer institutions for data benchmarking is considered best practice.

Standard Set of Berkeley Peer Institutions

| | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| <u>private</u> | <u>public</u> |
| Harvard | Illinois |
| MIT | Michigan |
| Princeton | Texas |
| Stanford | Virginia |
| Yale | Wisconsin |
| <u>other UC</u> | |
| Los Angeles | |
| San Diego | |

This set of peer institutions has been used for more than 15 years for standard benchmarking purposes, such as the WSCUC accreditation process. Altering the peer group for a particular data set without good reason is avoided since “cherry picking” peers to make one’s own institution look better is not considered best practice.

Berkeley’s private peer group includes 4 Ivy League universities plus Stanford, while 5 flagship schools make up the publics. Along with UCLA and UC San Diego, this group

represents Berkeley’s major competitors in terms of faculty and students. All are categorized “Doctoral Universities: Highest Research Activity” in *The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education*.
<http://carnegieclassifications.iu.edu/index.php>

Benchmarking at the college or department level, as is done in Berkeley’s academic program review, may require a unique peer group. Peers from the standard group may not offer a particular discipline, yet some data sources require a minimum number of institutions be included in a group summary.

Another standard set of peers that the UC Office of the President has historically used to benchmark faculty salaries for the UC system is the “Comparison 8”. These universities were selected in part to ensure that medical universities were included in the peer group, MIT being the exception.

UC Comparison 8 Institutions

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| <u>private</u> | <u>public</u> |
| Harvard | Buffalo |
| MIT | Illinois |
| Stanford | Michigan |
| Yale | Virginia |

For further information, please contact the Office of Planning & Analysis, or visit our web site at opa.berkeley.edu.