

The Delaware Study: A National Study of Instructional Costs and Productivity

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Faculty Senate
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Note: Portions of this presentation are based on a presentation created by the Delaware Study and are adapted here with permission.

Background

- Spring 2012 Faculty Senate Meeting
 - Strategic Initiatives Project Discussion:
 - Strategic Value-Financial Strength Exercise
- Points Raised:
 - Costs vary by discipline
 - External benchmarks by discipline are more informative than internal comparisons
- Delaware Study mentioned
- UVM last participated in 2004

What is the Delaware Study?

- National benchmarking project and data sharing consortium among four- year colleges and universities; 200 institutions participate annually
- Comparative analysis tool of *faculty teaching loads, direct instructional costs, and separately budgeted scholarly activity, all within academic disciplines*; only national study of its kind
- Data elements are collected and reported based on standard definitions to facilitate benchmarking against like departments across three benchmark groups:
 - Similar proportion of degrees awarded at the undergraduate level by department
 - Same highest degree awarded by department
 - Same institutional Carnegie classification (research university)

Delaware Study

Strengths and Limitations

Strengths

- Tool for *national* benchmarking of instructional costs, research, and public service expenditures at the academic discipline level
- Systematic and rigorous conceptualization based on CIP levels

Limitations

- Not a “whole cost” benchmarking tool for expenditure or tuition (only department-level instructional expenditures as defined in the Delaware Study)
- Not a set of quality indicators

Teaching Load Metrics Include:

- Undergraduate and Graduate Student Credit Hours Taught per FTE Faculty
- Total Organized Class Sections Taught per FTE Faculty
- FTE Students Taught per FTE Faculty
 - By instructor type/category
- Also select metrics by level of instruction (lower division/upper division undergraduate; graduate)

Note: Faculty FTE exclude faculty FTE not potentially available to support instruction (FTE on external research grants, etc.).

Fiscal Metrics Include:

- Direct Instructional Expense per Student Credit Hour Taught
- Direct Instructional Expense per FTE Student Taught
- Separately Budgeted Research and Service Expenditures per FTE Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty

Note: Instructional expenditures include salaries, benefits, and other departmental operating expenses classified as instructional.

Delaware Ratio Comparisons Fall 2011

(derived from department data)

College	UVM T/TT Ratio	UVM % of UG Degree % Group Avg.	UVM % of Highest Degree Offered Group Avg.	UVM % of Carnegie Group Avg.	UVM Overall (all Instructor Types) Ratio	UVM % of UG Degree % Group Avg.	UVM % of Highest Degree Offered Group Avg.	UVM % of Carnegie Group Avg.
BSAD	17.5	108.0%	103.6%	110.1%	16.9	89.4%	89.4%	84.5%
CALS	21.3	108.1%	107.6%	102.9%	15.6	95.7%	84.3%	97.5%
CAS	14.7	100.7%	98.0%	105.8%	15.9	98.8%	95.8%	101.9%
CEMS	14.6	113.2%	102.0%	105.0%	15.2	95.6%	88.4%	87.4%
CESS	11.9	88.7%	100.8%	106.3%	12.4	85.2%	84.1%	87.7%
CNHS	9.0	68.2%	65.8%	67.2%	10.1	72.4%	71.9%	50.7%
RSENR	15.6	130.0%	91.8%	102.0%	19.6	140.0%	139.0%	135.2%
Total	14.7	101.4%	98.0%	103.5%	15.2	96.2%	92.1%	96.8%

Delaware Instructional Expenditures per SCH Comparisons (FY12)

College	UVM Direct Instructional \$ per SCH	UVM % of UG Degree % Group Avg.	UVM % of Highest Degree Offered Group Avg.	UVM % of Carnegie Group Avg.
BSAD	\$408	191.5%	172.9%	153.4%
CALS	\$237	98.8%	79.8%	90.1%
CAS	\$240	123.7%	124.4%	111.1%
CEMS	\$296	124.9%	122.8%	126.5%
CESS	\$512	212.4%	201.6%	177.8%
CNHS	\$495	148.2%	144.3%	135.6%
RSENR	\$292	103.2%	96.1%	98.0%
Total	\$290	131.8%	126.1%	119.8%

BSAD's own analysis, utilizing a different method and set of benchmark institutions, suggests it is closer to the average of its own set of benchmark institutions.

CESS notes that it may have more instructional expenditures paid out of restricted funding sources than the benchmark institutions and that may explain some portion of the difference from the benchmark averages; also confirming coding for such expenses with SPA.

Cost Results

- Overall results not surprising: consistent with UVM's prior Delaware results (2004); similar to IPEDS financial data showing UVM generally higher than publics and lower than privates

Explanatory Factors

- Many factors influence cost results, including:
 - Academic emphases
 - Teaching loads and ratios (SCH/Faculty FTE)
 - Composition of instructors (tenure-track, other)
 - Compensation
 - Other departmental operating costs (scale)
 - Scope of activity beyond teaching

Use of Delaware Data

- Tool of inquiry regarding ratios, teaching load patterns and trends, and unique aspects of academic programs
- Best when viewed over multiple years (results in any given year can be subject to one-time events)
- Provides a broader context: where are we similar to and different from national benchmarks
- Designed to be used in a formative, constructive way

Questions and Discussion

Thank you for the opportunity to introduce the Delaware study.

Please contact OIR at 6-4418 or jfryan@uvm.edu for additional information and data.