

January 7, 2010

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Regents
FROM: William A. Sederburg
SUBJECT: Peer Institutions List: Southern Utah University

Background

The Commissioner's Office continues its process of working with USHE campuses to update their lists of peer institutions. A new list was approved for Salt Lake Community College in December, and work is in the early stages for several additional institutions. This month, we bring forward a revised list for Southern Utah University (SUU).

Formally approved peer lists are used for various financial and statistical comparisons (Tab M of the annual Data Book provides one example), and – with the evolving nature of institutions – it is important to review the lists on occasion in order to assure that peer group members remain representative of the nature and mission of the USHE institution to which they are being compared. Board of Regents policy R508 provides guidelines for the creation and approval of peer institutions groups. Utilizing those guidelines, SUU and OCHE have completed the task of revising the SUU peer list.

Issue

Southern Utah University continues its focus as Utah's public/private institution – offering personalized learning attention in a residential campus setting. In recognition of this focus, SUU desired to bring to its peer list, institutions from across the nation that align their resources in a similar fashion. SUU and OCHE have spent the past several months exploring updates to the Southern Utah University Peer Institution List. In undertaking this endeavor, the services of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) were utilized. NCHEMS offers a Comparison Group Selection Service that is designed to aid in selecting groups of institutions with similar missions and demographic characteristics as an aid for comparative data analyses.

The NCHEMS selection service combed through a database of all higher education institutions; reviewing several dozen variables of institutional characteristics, and condensing the list to a workable number for the target institution. Amongst the more important variables reviewed:

- Size and service area
- Student body characteristics
- Mix of associate, baccalaureate, and masters degrees
- Academic program mix

At that point, NCHEMS, OCHE, and SUU worked together to narrow the universe of reviewed institutions to a final listing, collectively agreed upon. This listing represents a like group of public four year institutions with selected graduate programs in mid-size to small cities across the country, institutions with predominantly full-time students, an emphasis on the undergraduate experience and an emphasis on instruction over primary research.

(Please see Appendix A – SUU Peer Institution List)

Commissioner's Recommendation

The Commissioner recommends approval of the revised Peer Institution List for Southern Utah University.

William A. Sederburg
Commissioner of Higher Education

WAS/GLS
Attachment

APPENDIX A

(Memo SUU Peer Institution List 1-15-10)

Southern Utah University Peer Institution List:

Institution	Location	Total Headcount Students	Full-time Faculty	Bachelors Programs
Austin Peay State U	Clarksville, TN	9,094	286	22
Christopher Newport U	Newport News, VA	4,884	226	15
Columbus St U	Columbus, GA	7,593	246	16
Eastern Connecticut St U	Willimantic, CT	5,137	199	17
Georgia College & State U	Milledgeville, GA	6,249	262	19
Sonoma State U	Rohnert Park, CA	8,770	273	21
Southern Oregon U	Ashland, OR	4,832	185	19
SUNY at Geneseo	Geneseo, NY	5,548	250	16
Truman State U	Kirksville, MO	5,920	344	18
Western Carolina U	Cullowhee, NC	9,056	456	21
Southern Utah U	Cedar City, UT	7,057	222	21

Full-time Equivalencies (FTE's) at the institutions range from 4,207 to 8,066. SUU's FTE # is 6,572.