

An Introduction to

# THE COST STUDY

at the University of Delaware

*How does your cost of instruction vary by program?*

*How do you compare to peer institutions?*



# OVERVIEW

The National Study of Instructional Costs and Productivity (The Cost Study) is a **national longitudinal study** that focuses on the academic program-level analysis of **faculty instructional workloads and costs** and provides an improved understanding of **cost differences by academic program** as well as cost trends and cost drivers.

The Cost Study is conducted annually by the Higher Education Consortia (HEC). HEC is composed of a diverse group of over 700 **four-year, public and private, non-profit colleges and universities** that have contributed data to The Cost Study since its inception in the 1990s. In continued collaboration with an advisory board, various regional and national associations, and policy experts, HEC is committed to **guiding research and public understanding** of the changing realities that affect productivity and cost in higher education.

# DATA COLLECTION



## Who...

- **Regular faculty:** tenured/tenure eligible, other regular faculty, supplemental faculty
- **Teaching assistants:** credit bearing courses and non-credit bearing courses



## ...is teaching what to whom...

- Undergraduate lower and upper division **student credit hours (SCH)** and **organized class sections (OCS)**
- Graduate SCH and OCS
- Undergraduate and graduate individualized instruction SCH
- Online undergraduate and graduate SCH



## ...and at what cost?

- **Direct expenditures** for instruction: **salary, benefits, and non-personnel expenditures**
- Expenditures for separately budgeted **research** activities and **public service** activities

# ANALYSES

The Cost Study offers several analyses to participating institutions. Key metrics include faculty workload (student credit hours, organized class sections, and full-time equivalent (FTE) students per FTE faculty) and efficiency (instructional costs per student credit hour or per FTE student).

## Institutional reports

- Ratio tables comparing key metrics by academic program using Classification of Instructional Programs—CIP codes

## National norms and three-year-average benchmarks by

- Carnegie Classification
- Highest degree offered
- Percentage of undergraduate degrees

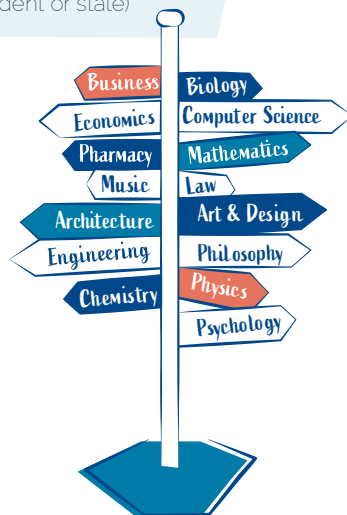
## Custom peer analyses with self-selected or data-driven peer groups

- Select at least 10 peers from the list of the participants in each given year
- Common peer selection criteria include Carnegie Classification, location, and institutional governance (independent or state)

# BENEFITS

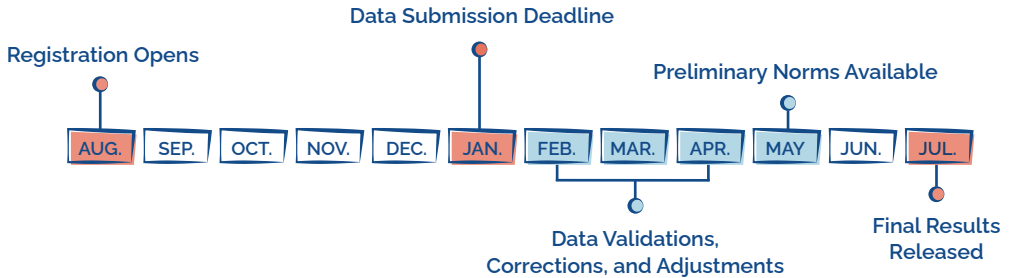
The Cost Study

- Promotes excellence in resource utilization using comparisons made at the academic program level
- Targets productivity improvement by analyzing teaching workloads
- Collects longitudinal data, allowing institutions to track trends
- Is widely accepted and used nationally



## PROCESS

Registration for The Cost Study opens in August. Upon registration, participants may start their data submission. Data are to be submitted by the end of January. Submissions will be validated and institutions will be able to adjust or correct their initial submissions as needed. Three-year-average reports are available to institutions once their data submissions are validated. The preliminary norms are available by the end of May, and the final results are released in July.



## PARTICIPATION FEE

The Cost Study is an affordable, not-for-profit study that is led by a four-year, nonprofit institution and serves many other similar institutions. The participation fee follows a tiered structure and is based on the participant's institutional Carnegie Classification. Discounts are available with a commitment to two consecutive years of participation.



For more information about The Cost Study:  
<https://ire.udel.edu/cost/>

For more information about HEC:  
<https://ire.udel.edu/cost/intro-to-hec/>

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