

2005 Carnegie Classification System as described on the Carnegie Foundation Web Site

(Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi classifications are printed in red)

Basic Classification Description

The Basic Classification is an update of the traditional classification framework developed by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education in 1970 to support its research program, and later published in 1973 for use by other researchers. Although this classification has undergone many changes over the years, the current release involves some significant changes from previous editions.

Overarching Changes

Order of presentation. We now present major groupings in order of aggregate enrollment.

Single-year data. Previous editions of the Carnegie Classification used a combination of single-year data and multiple-year averages. While using data from several years can smooth out year-to-year fluctuations, it can also diminish the classification's sensitivity to changes. Because the classifications are inherently retrospective, time-specific snapshots, accuracy and timeliness are enhanced by using the most current data available.

Exceptions. Although previous editions of the Carnegie Classification identified specific empirical criteria for assigning colleges and universities to categories, some institutions were classified instead on the basis of their history, traditions, and identity. This practice undermined the classification's transparency and replicability, and it led to concerns that the rules were different for certain institutions. With this revision of the classification, we are substantially curtailing this practice, because we now have additional classification tools that can be used to identify distinctive subtypes. We have also increased the level of master's degree production separating the baccalaureate and master's categories, recognizing the growth of graduate education at primarily undergraduate colleges.

The Carnegie Classification now includes new classification schemes and a web-based tool for examining and combining them—both to identify points of intersection between classification schemes, and also to create new, customized classifications. This provides a way to explicitly identify special groupings within categories of the basic classification, identifying contextual factors that were previously not available for examination. For example, users can identify the subset of Master's Colleges and Universities that are small and highly residential institutions, and they can further refine the list according to student body and undergraduate program characteristics. We believe this is an appropriate way to overcome the limitations of any single classification.

There remain some circumstances in which we have considered requests for special handling: cases where the 2003-04 degree data reflect a verifiable departure from usual patterns; cases where graduate programs are wholly or predominantly isolated from the undergraduate program, either geographically (e.g., a satellite campus) or temporally (e.g., during the summer when undergraduates are not present); cases where the institutional data combine information from distinct units with different missions and that serving different populations (e.g., a degree-completion program serving working adults and a traditional undergraduate program); and cases where inclusion among special-focus institutions may not represent the diversity of an institution's programs.

Category-specific Changes

Associate's Colleges. For the first time in the Carnegie Classification's history, two-year colleges have been split into subcategories. The categories are based on the work of Stephen Katsinas, Vincent Lacey, and David Hardy at The University of Alabama. The new Undergraduate Profile and Size &

Setting classifications also differentiate two-year colleges, thus researchers now have several ways to take the diversity of two-year colleges into account.

Doctorate-granting Universities. With this edition, doctorate-granting institutions are once again differentiated based on an explicit measure of research activity. We now use a multi-measure index rather than the single measure of federal funding used in previous editions. This approach incorporates several improvements: it is not limited to funding; the funding measures used are not limited to federal funding; and the analysis considers both aggregate and per-capita measures of research activity. Using the new methodology, we have identified three categories of doctorate-granting institutions. Because of these changes, the new categories are not comparable to those previously used (Research I & II and Doctoral I & II; and Doctoral/Research—Extensive and Intensive).

We also simplified the degree-production criterion for inclusion among doctorate-granting institutions. Previous editions defined this group as institutions awarding at least 20 doctoral degrees per year or at least 10 such degrees per year spanning at least three fields. For this edition we dropped the latter criterion. Institutions with lower levels of doctoral degree production can be identified using the Graduate Instructional Program classification.

Master’s Colleges and Universities. We now split master’s institutions into three categories based on the volume of master’s degree production. We have also increased the level of master’s degree production separating Baccalaureate and Master’s institutions. Institutions with lower levels of master’s degree production can be identified using the Graduate Instructional Program classification.

Baccalaureate Colleges. Although our criteria for subcategories are unchanged from the 2000 edition, we have discontinued the use of the “Liberal Arts” terminology in favor of a term that more transparently describes the classification criteria. (Both “liberal arts college” and “liberal arts education” signify more than the proportion of undergraduates who major in traditional arts and sciences fields.) Note that the new Undergraduate Instructional Program classification offers finer differentiation of the distribution of undergraduate majors, while also identifying institutions where arts and sciences and professional fields are represented among majors in roughly equal proportions.

Because we increased the threshold level of master’s degree production separating Baccalaureate and Master’s institutions, some institutions that previously would have been classified among Master’s Colleges and Universities II are now included among Baccalaureate Colleges. Exclusively undergraduate institutions can be identified using the Enrollment Profile classification, and the Undergraduate Instructional Program classification can be used to determine the degree of correspondence between undergraduate and graduate programs.

Special Focus Institutions (previously called Specialized Institutions). In addition to the name change, we have refined our methodology for identifying special-focus institutions, generally requiring higher levels of single-field or related-field concentration for designation as a special-focus institution. We are also using more sources of information to identify these institutions (see Technical Details for more information).

We also made some category changes: “Schools of engineering and technology” has been split into two categories, and the “Teacher’s colleges” category was eliminated due to the small number of eligible institutions (now listed among “Other special-focus institutions”). Finally, service academies are no longer automatically included among special-focus institutions; they are classified according to the same criteria as other institutions.

Categories (Refer to Technical Details for category definitions and data sources.)

Associate’s Colleges.

Includes institutions where all degrees are at the associate's level, or where bachelor's degrees account for less than 10 percent of all undergraduate degrees. Excludes institutions eligible for classification as Tribal Colleges or Special Focus Institutions.

Assoc/Pub-R-S: Associate's—Public Rural-serving Small
Assoc/Pub-R-M: Associate's—Public Rural-serving Medium
Assoc/Pub-R-L: Associate's—Public Rural-serving Large
Assoc/Pub-S-SC: Associate's—Public Suburban-serving Single Campus
Assoc/Pub-S-MC: Associate's—Public Suburban-serving Multicampus
Assoc/Pub-U-SC: Associate's—Public Urban-serving Single Campus
Assoc/Pub-U-MC: Associate's—Public Urban-serving Multicampus
Assoc/Pub-Spec: Associate's—Public Special Use
Assoc/PrivNFP: Associate's—Private Not-for-profit
Assoc/PrivFP: Associate's—Private For-profit
Assoc/Pub2in4: Associate's—Public 2-year Colleges under Universities
Assoc/Pub4: Associate's—Public 4-year, Primarily Associate's
Assoc/PrivNFP4: Associate's—Private Not-for-profit 4-year, Primarily Associate's
Assoc/PrivFP4: Associate's—Private For-profit 4-year, Primarily Associate's

Doctorate-granting Universities.

Includes institutions that award at least 20 doctoral degrees per year (excluding doctoral-level degrees that qualify recipients for entry into professional practice, such as the JD, MD, PharmD, DPT, etc.). Excludes Special Focus Institutions and Tribal Colleges.

RU/VH: Research Universities (very high research activity)
RU/H: Research Universities (high research activity)
DRU: Doctoral/Research Universities

Master's Colleges and Universities.

Includes institutions that award at least 50 master's degrees per year. Excludes Special Focus Institutions and Tribal Colleges.

Master's/L: Master's Colleges and Universities (larger programs)

Master's/M: Master's Colleges and Universities (medium programs)
Master's/S: Master's Colleges and Universities (smaller programs)

Baccalaureate Colleges.

Includes institutions where baccalaureate degrees represent at least 10 percent of all undergraduate degrees and that award fewer than 50 master's degrees or fewer than 20 doctoral degrees per year. Excludes Special Focus Institutions and Tribal Colleges.

Bac/A&S: Baccalaureate Colleges—Arts & Sciences
Bac/Diverse: Baccalaureate Colleges—Diverse Fields
Bac/Assoc: Baccalaureate/Associate's Colleges

Special Focus Institutions.

Institutions awarding baccalaureate or higher-level degrees where a high concentration of degrees is in a single field or set of related fields. Excludes Tribal Colleges.

Spec/Faith: Theological seminaries, Bible colleges, and other faith-related institutions
Spec/Medical: Medical schools and medical centers
Spec/Health: Other health profession schools

Spec/Engg: Schools of engineering
Spec/Tech: Other technology-related schools
Spec/Bus: Schools of business and management
Spec/Arts: Schools of art, music, and design
Spec/Law: Schools of law
Spec/Other: Other special-focus institutions

Tribal Colleges.

Colleges and universities that are members of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, as identified in IPEDS Institutional Characteristics.

Tribal: Tribal Colleges

Undergraduate Instructional Program Description

The vast majority of U.S. institutions of higher education teach undergraduates. Indeed, undergraduate education is an essential component of what most colleges and universities do. Even at institutions with strong commitments to graduate education and the production of new knowledge through research and scholarship, the undergraduate program usually accounts for the majority of student enrollment. This new classification focuses attention on undergraduate education regardless of the presence or extent of graduate education. (Similarly, our undergraduate profile classification focuses on the undergraduate population at all institutions with undergraduates.)

The instructional program classification is based on three pieces of information: the level of undergraduate degrees awarded (associate's or bachelor's), the proportion of bachelor's degree majors in the arts and sciences and in professional fields, and the extent to which an institution awards graduate degrees in the same fields in which it awards undergraduate degrees.

The distinction between arts and sciences and professional undergraduate majors is one that has been made in the Classification since 1987 (but only for undergraduate colleges), and researchers and others in the higher education community have also made similar distinctions. We are extending and elaborating the previous analysis by (1) applying it to almost all baccalaureate-level institutions, (2) making finer distinctions along the arts & sciences - professions continuum, and (3) recognizing a "middle ground" where the two domains exist in relative balance with respect to graduating students' major concentrations.

A high concentration of majors in the arts and sciences is not the same as a liberal arts education, and we do not view any particular location on this continuum as the special province of liberal education. Examples of high-quality liberal education exist across the spectrum.

Some institutions enroll no graduate students. Others may have graduate programs that operate relatively independently of the undergraduate program (such as a law school). Still others offer graduate education in most or all fields where they have undergraduate programs. And of course, some institutions fall between these extremes. By examining the number of undergraduate fields in which we also see graduate degrees, we can locate institutions along this continuum of undergraduate-graduate "coexistence." Departments that teach only undergraduates can differ in many ways from those that also train graduate students. Examples of such differences include faculty activities and instructional resources.

It is important to emphasize that we do not view these continua (arts & sciences - professions or graduate coexistence) as signifying gradations in value or quality. The categories are as follows:

Assoc: Associate's. According to the degree data, these institutions awarded associate's degrees but no bachelor's degrees.

Assoc-Dom: Associate's Dominant. These institutions awarded both associate's and bachelor's degrees, but the majority of degrees awarded were at the associate's level.

A&S-F/NGC: Arts & sciences focus, no graduate coexistence. According to the degree data, at least 80 percent of bachelor's degree majors were in the arts and sciences, and no graduate degrees were awarded in fields corresponding to undergraduate majors.

A&S-F/SGC: Arts & sciences focus, some graduate coexistence. At least 80 percent of bachelor's degree majors were in the arts and sciences, and graduate degrees were observed in some of the fields corresponding to undergraduate majors (but less than half).

A&S-F/HGC: Arts & sciences focus, high graduate coexistence. At least 80 percent of bachelor's degree majors were in the arts and sciences, and graduate degrees were observed in at least half of the fields corresponding to undergraduate majors.

A&S+Prof/NGC: Arts & sciences plus professions, no graduate coexistence. According to the degree data, 60-79 percent of bachelor's degree majors were in the arts and sciences, and no graduate degrees were awarded in fields corresponding to undergraduate majors.

A&S+Prof/SGC: Arts & sciences plus professions, some graduate coexistence. 60-79 percent of bachelor's degree majors were in the arts and sciences, and graduate degrees were observed in some of the fields corresponding to undergraduate majors (but less than half).

A&S+Prof/HGC: Arts & sciences plus professions, high graduate coexistence. 60-79 percent of bachelor's degree majors were in the arts and sciences, and graduate degrees were observed in at least half of the fields corresponding to undergraduate majors.

Bal/NGC: Balanced arts & sciences/professions, no graduate coexistence. According to the degree data, bachelor's degree majors were relatively balanced between arts and sciences and professional fields (41-59 percent in each), and no graduate degrees were awarded in fields corresponding to undergraduate majors.

Bal/SGC: Balanced arts & sciences/professions, some graduate coexistence. Bachelor's degree majors were relatively balanced between arts and sciences and professional fields (41-59 percent in each), and graduate degrees were observed in some of the fields corresponding to undergraduate majors (but less than half).

Bal/HGC: Balanced arts & sciences/professions, high graduate coexistence. Bachelor's degree majors were relatively balanced between arts and sciences and professional fields (41-59 percent in each), and graduate degrees were observed in at least half of the fields corresponding to undergraduate majors.

Prof+A&S/NGC: Professions plus arts & sciences, no graduate coexistence. According to the degree data, 60-79 percent of bachelor's degree majors were in professional fields (such as business, education, engineering, health, and social work), and no graduate degrees were awarded in fields corresponding to undergraduate majors.

Prof+A&S/SGC: Professions plus arts & sciences, some graduate coexistence. 60-79 percent of bachelor's degree majors were in professional fields, and graduate degrees were observed in some of the fields corresponding to undergraduate majors (but less than half).

Prof+A&S/HGC: Professions plus arts & sciences, high graduate coexistence. 60-79 percent of bachelor's degree majors were in professional fields, and graduate degrees were observed in at least half of the fields corresponding to undergraduate majors.

Prof-F/NGC: Professions focus, no graduate coexistence. According to the degree data, at least 80 percent of bachelor's degree majors were in professional fields (such as business, education, engineering, health, and social work), and no graduate degrees were awarded in fields corresponding to undergraduate majors.

Prof-F/SGC: Professions focus, some graduate coexistence. At least 80 percent of bachelor's degree majors were in professional fields, and graduate degrees were observed in some of the fields corresponding to undergraduate majors (but less than half).

Prof-F/HGC: Professions focus, high graduate coexistence. At least 80 percent of bachelor's degree majors were in professional fields, and graduate degrees were observed in at least half of the fields corresponding to undergraduate majors.

Classifications are time-specific snapshots of institutional attributes and behavior based on data from 2003 and 2004. Institutions might be classified differently using a different timeframe.

Graduate Instructional Program Description

As a companion to the Undergraduate Instructional Program classification, this classification examines the nature of graduate education, with a special focus on the mix of graduate programs. In this classification, a single graduate-level degree qualifies an institution for inclusion.

The classification is based on the level of graduate degrees awarded (master's/professional or doctoral), the number of fields represented by the degrees awarded, and the mix or concentration of degrees by broad disciplinary domain. The classification has two parts: one for institutions that do not award the doctorate, and one for doctoral-level institutions (based on the record of degree conferrals, not program offerings). Within each group, we then classify institutions with respect to the breadth of graduate offerings and the concentration of degrees in certain fields or combinations of fields.

For two categories of doctorate-granting institutions, we distinguish institutions offering medical education (defined as human or veterinary medical education, including allopathic medicine, osteopathic medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine). Institutions in other categories may also offer medical education, but the numbers were not large enough to justify subcategories and we judged it preferable to differentiate with respect to the other graduate fields, rather than with respect to the presence or absence of medical education.

NOTE: Because a single doctoral-level degree (as defined in the IPEDS data collection of the National Center for Education Statistics) qualifies an institution for inclusion in the doctoral categories, a small number of institutions with large master's or professional programs and modest doctoral-level programs are currently classified according to their doctoral programs.

The categories are listed below. The term "comprehensive" is used here to denote *comprehensiveness of offerings across a range of fields*. This is a different usage from that in previous editions of the Carnegie Classification.

S-Postbac/Ed: Single Postbaccalaureate (education). Based on the degree data, these institutions award master's degrees in education but not in other fields.

S-Postbac/Bus: Single Postbaccalaureate (business). Based on the degree data, these institutions award master's degrees in business but not in other fields.

S-Postbac/Other: Single Postbaccalaureate (other field). Based on the degree data, these institutions award master's or professional degrees in a single field other than education or business.

Postbac-Comp: Postbaccalaureate comprehensive. According to the degree data, these institutions award master's degrees in the humanities, social sciences, and STEM* fields, and degrees in one or more professional fields.

Postbac-A&S: Postbaccalaureate, arts & sciences dominant. These institutions award master's degrees in some arts and sciences fields. They may also award master's or professional degrees in other fields, but in lesser numbers.

Postbac-A&S/Ed: Postbaccalaureate with arts & sciences (education dominant). These institutions award master's degrees in some arts and sciences fields as well as degrees in professional fields, and the plurality of graduate degrees are in education.

Postbac-A&S/Bus: Postbaccalaureate with arts & sciences (business dominant). These institutions award master's degrees in some arts and sciences fields as well as degrees in professional fields, and the plurality of graduate degrees are in business.

Postbac-A&S/Other: Postbaccalaureate with arts & sciences (other dominant fields). These institutions award master's degrees in some arts and sciences fields as well as degrees in professional fields, and the plurality of graduate degrees are in a professional field other than business or education.

Postbac-Prof/Ed: Postbaccalaureate professional (education dominant). According to the degree data, these institutions award master's or professional degrees in professional fields, and the plurality of graduate degrees are in education.

Postbac-Prof/Bus: Postbaccalaureate professional (business dominant). According to the degree data, these institutions award master's or professional degrees in professional fields, and the plurality of graduate degrees are in business.

Postbac-Prof/Other: Postbaccalaureate professional (other dominant fields). According to the degree data, these institutions award master's or professional degrees in professional fields, and the plurality of graduate degrees are in a field other than business or education.

S-Doc/Ed: Single doctoral (education). Based on the degree data, these institutions award doctoral degrees in education but do not offer other graduate/professional education.

S-Doc/Other: Single doctoral (other field). Based on the degree data, these institutions award doctoral degrees in a single field other than education.

CompDoc/MedVet: Comprehensive doctoral with medical/veterinary. According to the degree data, these institutions award doctoral degrees in the humanities, social sciences, and STEM* fields, and they also award degrees in medicine, dentistry, and/or veterinary medicine. They also offer professional education in other health professions or in fields such as business, education, engineering, law, public policy, or social work.

CompDoc/NMedVet: Comprehensive doctoral (no medical/veterinary). According to the degree data, these institutions award doctoral degrees in the humanities, social sciences, and STEM* fields. They also offer professional education in fields such as business, education, engineering, law, public policy, social work, or health professions other than medicine, dentistry, or veterinary medicine.

Doc/HSS: Doctoral, humanities/social sciences dominant. According to the degree data, these institutions award doctoral degrees in a range of fields, with the plurality in the humanities or social sciences. They may also offer professional education at the doctoral level or in fields such as law or medicine.

Doc/STEM: Doctoral, STEM dominant. According to the degree data, these institutions award doctoral degrees in a range of fields, with the plurality in the STEM* fields. They may also offer professional education at the doctoral level or in fields such as law or medicine.

Doc/Prof: Doctoral, professions dominant. According to the degree data, these institutions award doctoral degrees in a range of fields, with the plurality in the professions other than engineering (such as education, health professions, public policy, or social work). They may also offer professional education in law or medicine.

* STEM: Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Classifications are time-specific snapshots of institutional attributes and behavior based on data from 2003 and 2004. Institutions might be classified differently using a different timeframe.

Undergraduate Profile Description

This new classification describes the undergraduate population with respect to three characteristics: the proportion who attend part- or full-time; achievement characteristics of first-year students; and the proportion of entering students who transfer in from another institution. Each of these captures important differences in the nature of the undergraduate population. They do not imply differences in the quality of undergraduate education, but they have implications for how an institution serves its students.

Some institutions serve a primarily full-time student population, while others serve large numbers of students who attend part-time due to substantial work and family commitments outside school. These differences have implications for the scheduling of classes, student services, extracurricular activities, time to degree, and other factors. Part-time students also tend to be older than full-time students, and older students bring more life experience and maturity into the classroom, often accompanied by a greater zeal for learning compared with those who have not spent any appreciable time away from formal education. Older students also face special challenges related to the competing obligations of school, work, and family.

Entrance examination scores describe—with limitations—the academic preparation of entering first-year students, which in turn corresponds to selectivity of undergraduate admissions. Although they should not be used as a gauge of institutional quality, admissions test scores and selectivity are widely used by institutions, academic researchers, and others in gauging the comparability of colleges and universities. For all the criticisms of standardized tests, they provide the only comparable, widely available metric for students' prior academic preparation and achievement.

A measure of transfer origin identifies institutions where many undergraduates enter as first-year students and progress to graduation, as compared with those where an appreciable number of students begin their college careers elsewhere. Serving larger numbers of transfer students has a number of implications, such as the planning and assessment of general education, student advising, the structure of majors, and so on. At schools admitting large numbers of transfer students, test score data based on the first-time first-year population may not adequately describe the undergraduate population as a whole.

For some institutions, analysis of aggregate student enrollments can conceal the fact that two distinct programs and student populations are included. These institutions offer relatively distinct undergraduate programs—one serves a student body consisting of recent high school graduates who typically attend full-time and who reside on or close to campus (often living with other students), while the other program focuses on degree completion for returning students. Students in degree completion programs typically have families and full-time jobs, and they may attend part-time and

commute to school or enroll online. For such institutions, the undergraduate profile classification may not accurately characterize either program.

The categories are as follows:

PT2: Higher part-time two-year. Fall enrollment data show at least 60 percent of undergraduates enrolled part-time at these associate's degree granting institutions.

Mix2: Mixed part/full-time two-year. Fall enrollment data show 40-59 percent of undergraduates enrolled part-time at these associate's degree granting institutions.

MFT2: Medium full-time two-year. Fall enrollment data show 10-39 percent of undergraduates enrolled part-time at these associate's degree granting institutions.

FT2: Higher full-time two-year. Fall enrollment data show less than 10 percent of undergraduates enrolled part-time at these associate's degree granting institutions.

PT4: Higher part-time four-year. Fall enrollment data show at least 40 percent of undergraduates enrolled part-time at these bachelor's degree granting institutions.

MFT4/I: Medium full-time four-year, inclusive. Fall enrollment data show 60-79 percent of undergraduates enrolled full-time at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. These institutions either did not report test score data or the scores indicate that they extend educational opportunity to a wide range of students with respect to academic preparation and achievement.

MFT4/S/LTI: Medium full-time four-year, selective, lower transfer-in. Fall enrollment data show 60-79 percent of undergraduates enrolled full-time at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. Score data for first-year students indicate that these institutions are selective in admissions (our analysis of first-year students' test scores places most of these institutions in roughly the middle two-fifths of baccalaureate institutions). Fewer than 20 percent of entering undergraduates are transfer students.

MFT4/S/HTI: Medium full-time four-year, selective, higher transfer-in. Fall enrollment data show 60-79 percent of undergraduates enrolled full-time at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. Score data for first-year students indicate that these institutions are selective in admissions (our analysis of first-year students' test scores places most of these institutions in roughly the middle two-fifths of baccalaureate institutions). At least 20 percent of entering undergraduates are transfer students.

FT4/I: Full-time four-year, inclusive. Fall enrollment data show at least 80 percent of undergraduates enrolled full-time at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. These institutions either did not report test score data or the scores indicate that they extend educational opportunity to a wide range of students with respect to academic preparation and achievement.

FT4/S/LTI: Full-time four-year, selective, lower transfer-in. Fall enrollment data show at least 80 percent of undergraduates enrolled full-time at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. Score data for first-year students indicate that these institutions are selective in admissions (our analysis of first-year students' test scores places these institutions in roughly the middle two-fifths of baccalaureate institutions). Fewer than 20 percent of entering undergraduates are transfer students.

FT4/S/HTI: Full-time four-year, selective, higher transfer-in. Fall enrollment data show at least 80 percent of undergraduates enrolled full-time at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. Score data for first-year students indicate that these institutions are selective in admissions (our analysis of first-year students' test scores places these institutions in roughly the middle two-fifths of baccalaureate institutions). At least 20 percent of entering undergraduates are transfer students.

FT4/MS/LTI: Full-time four-year, more selective, lower transfer-in. Fall enrollment data show at least 80 percent of undergraduates enrolled full-time at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. Score data for first-year students indicate that these institutions are more selective in admissions (our analysis of first-year students' test scores places these institutions in roughly the top fifth of baccalaureate institutions). Fewer than 20 percent of entering undergraduates are transfer students.

FT4/MS/HTI: Full-time four-year, more selective, higher transfer-in. Fall enrollment data show at least 80 percent of undergraduates enrolled full-time at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. Score data for first-year students indicate that these institutions are more selective in admissions (our analysis of first-year students' test scores places these institutions in roughly the top fifth of baccalaureate institutions). At least 20 percent of entering undergraduates are transfer students.

Classifications are time-specific snapshots of institutional attributes and behavior based on data from 2003 and 2004. Institutions might be classified differently using a different timeframe.

Size & Setting Description

This classification describes institutions' size and residential character. Because residential character applies to the undergraduate student body, exclusively graduate/professional institutions are not included.

Size matters. It is related to institutional structure, complexity, culture, finances, and other factors. Indeed, it is probably the most influential omitted variable in the 1970 classification framework. Residential or nonresidential character reflects aspects of the campus environment, student population served, and the mix of programs and services that an institution provides.

Four-year institutions are divided into four categories of full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment and three categories of residential character. Neither characteristic implies differences in the quality of undergraduate education, but an institution's location along the two continua generally corresponds to a distinctive mix of educational challenges and opportunities. Because few two-year institutions serve a residential population, these institutions are classified solely based on FTE enrollment.

The residential character measure is based on two attributes: the proportion of degree-seeking undergraduates who attend full-time and the proportion living in institutionally-owned, -operated, or -affiliated housing. It is important to note the variety of situations of students who do not live in college or university housing. Some are true "commuting" students, while others may live with other students in rental housing on the periphery of campus, and still others are distance education students who rarely or never set foot on a campus.

The categories are as follows:

VS2: Very small two-year. Fall enrollment data show FTE* enrollment of fewer than 500 students at these associate's degree granting institutions.

S2: Small two-year. Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of 500-1,999 students at these associate's degree granting institutions.

M2: Medium two-year. Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of 2,000-4,999 students at these associate's degree granting institutions.

L2: Large two-year. Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of 5,000-9,999 students at these associate's degree granting institutions.

VL2: Very large two-year. Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of at least 10,000 students at

these associate's degree granting institutions.

VS4/NR: Very small four-year, primarily nonresidential. Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of fewer than 1,000 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. Fewer than 25 percent of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus** (includes exclusively distance education institutions).

VS4/R: Very small four-year, primarily residential. Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of fewer than 1,000 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. 25-49 percent of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus.

VS4/HR: Very small four-year, highly residential. Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of fewer than 1,000 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. At least half of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus.

S4/NR: Small four-year, primarily nonresidential. Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of 1,000-2,999 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. Fewer than 25 percent of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus (includes exclusively distance education institutions).

S4/R: Small four-year, primarily residential. Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of 1,000-2,999 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. 25-49 percent of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus.

S4/HR: Small four-year, highly residential. Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of 1,000-2,999 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. At least half of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus.

M4/NR: Medium four-year, primarily nonresidential. Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of 3,000-9,999 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. Fewer than 25 percent of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus (includes exclusively distance education institutions).

M4/R: Medium four-year, primarily residential. Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of 3,000-9,999 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. 25-49 percent of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus.

M4/HR: Medium four-year, highly residential. Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of 3,000-9,999 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. At least half of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus.

L4/NR: Large four-year, primarily nonresidential. Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of at least 10,000 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. Fewer than 25 percent of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus (includes exclusively distance education institutions).

L4/R: Large four-year, primarily residential. Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of at least 10,000 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. 25-49 percent of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus.

L4/HR: Large four-year, highly residential. Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of at least 10,000 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. At least half of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus.

* FTE: Full-time equivalent enrollment was calculated as full-time plus one-third part-time.

** On campus is defined as institutionally-owned, -controlled, or -affiliated housing.