

November 5, 2014

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Regents
FROM: David L. Buhler
SUBJECT: Revision to Policy R508, Guidelines for Approving Lists of Comparable Institutions

Issue

Regent policy R508, *Guidelines for Approving Lists of Comparable Institutions*, has recently been reviewed by the Office of the Commissioner and USHE institutional representatives including: Presidents, Vice Presidents of Finance, and Budget Officers; this review is a part of the continuing review of all Regental policies. Some clean-up revisions are recommended.

Background

The key provisions addressed in R508's rewrite include:

- 1) Institutional references in section 3.2.1. - have been updated to reflect the singular missions of Snow College and Salt Lake Community College
- 2) The elimination of section 3.2.4. - as more data-driven provisions have proven to be available for the peer selection process
- 3) The elimination of section 3.3. - because this paragraph is not relevant to a policy outlining guidelines for selecting peer institution sets
- 4) Revisions to 3.4. (now 3.3.) - update language associated with proposed changes to peer institution groups

Commissioner's Recommendation

The Commissioner recommends that the Regents review the proposed revisions and if in agreement with the changes, approve the revisions to policy R508, *Guidelines for Approving Lists of Comparable Institutions*, effective immediately.

David L. Buhler
Commissioner of Higher Education

DLB/GLS/BLS/CRW/DAM
Attachment

R508, Guidelines for Approving Lists of Comparable Institutions¹

R508-1. Purpose: To guide the presidents in making requests for changes in lists of comparable institutions and to guide the Commissioner in making recommendations to the Board. For comparison purposes, the Board desires to group together institutions that are as similar as possible in the factors described below.

R508-2. References

2.1. ~~Utah Code §53B-7-101 (Combined Requests for Appropriations—Appropriation Formulas)~~ [Policy and Procedures R510, Tuition and Fees](#)

2.2. [Policy and Procedures R205, Presidential Appointment, Term of Office, and Compensation and Benefits](#)

R508-3. Guidelines

3.1. **General Considerations:** In proposing institutions to be included in a total list of comparable institutions, the following general considerations should guide decisions:

3.1.1. The institution should be the same 'type' of college or university; that is, the mission, role assignment, and clientele to be served should be similar.

3.1.2. The institution should have a comparable size enrollment insofar as this may be appropriate. It is not intended that the size of student body be identical, but institutions with much greater student enrollments should not be included unless other factors under consideration are very strong and compelling.

3.1.3. Generally, only institutions that are state supported should be included on the list of comparable institutions. However, comparisons with private institutions may be included if there is strong justification ~~for the same~~.

3.2. **Specific Considerations:** In proposing institutions to be included in a total list of comparable institutions, the following specific comparisons should be made in guiding decisions:

3.2.1. Institutions with specific functions beyond the scope of the Utah institution with which it is to be compared should be excluded ~~as may be appropriate~~. (For example, land-grant universities with strong programs in agriculture and natural resources should not be included on comparison lists with the University of Utah. Institutions with doctoral programs should not be on comparison lists with Weber State University. Institutions with law schools and medical schools should not be included on comparison lists with Utah State University. Two-year institutions serving special functions and special clientele schools should not be included on comparison lists with ~~our rural community colleges~~ [Snow College](#). Urban community colleges, for example, usually have a large student body of minority and disadvantaged students, and the student body and program offerings would be quite different from [Snow College](#). ~~our rural community colleges. Our urban community colleges~~ [Salt Lake Community College](#) should be compared with two-year colleges with extensive applied technology program offerings, and two-year colleges of a similar size but with a stronger

¹ Approved July 14-15, 1980, amended June 14, 1983.

emphasis on academic offerings should not be considered since they would not be recruiting the same type faculty as would our urban community colleges.)

3.2.2. The ratio of graduate students (and especially doctoral-level graduate students) should compare favorably with the ratio of such students in the Utah System of Higher Education institution under consideration. (This criterion will be particularly important in considering comparable institutions for the two [research](#) universities.)

3.2.3. Sponsored research is an [very](#) important responsibility of the universities. In considering other institutions for inclusion on lists of comparable institutions with the University of Utah and Utah State University, the scope and volume of sponsored research should be appraised.

~~3.2.4. To the extent that information is available, consideration should be given to institutions to which and from which persons holding faculty appointments have been successfully recruited over the past five year. (This includes recruitment of faculty from Utah institutions as well as recruitment of faculty by USHE institutions.)~~

~~3.3. Reporting of Salaries for Comparison Purposes: Both salary and total compensation (including fringe benefits and other forms of compensation) should be considered in making comparison of salaries. These calculations should show a breakdown for each academic rank and a percentile of the total range of salaries and other compensation.~~

3.4.3. Changes in Lists of Comparable Institutions: ~~Consideration for changing lists of comparable institutions will be given annually prior to or during budget hearing time in September. The [An](#) institution ~~applying for~~ [desiring](#) a change [of comparable institutions](#) should submit to the Commissioner's [Office](#) the necessary supporting data ~~and the same~~ [which](#) will be reviewed and verified ~~by the Commissioner~~ prior to ~~her or his~~ making a recommendation to the Board. Once an institution has been placed on a comparable list, it will generally not be removed for at least three years.~~

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