

# Narrative for UMA Draft Peer Institutions

10/13/2017

University of Maine at Augusta

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Filter

When selecting the categories that define UMA, there were no peer institutions found. Therefore, the filters were relaxed to bring 14 institutions that appear “somewhat” similar to UMA.

### Peer Selection Process

UMA selected the draft peer institutions based on:

1. Extensive data analysis
2. Discussions with the Executive Leadership Team and Provost Staff
3. Campus community feedback with explanation videos and a survey
4. The Chief Business Officer and two faculty representatives collaborated with the Director of Institutional Research on the data analysis and report.

### Student Characteristics

Compared to the draft peer institutions, UMA has higher percentages of the following data fields.

1. Part-time enrollment as percentage of total enrollment
2. Percent of enrollment age of 25 or older
3. Percent of full-time first-time undergraduates awarded Pell grants
4. Percent of undergraduate students enrolled exclusively in distance education courses

### Student Success Indicators

Compared to the draft peer institutions, UMA is challenged with regard to the following data fields, partly due to the aforementioned student characteristics as well as its relatively higher rates on a) student-to-faculty ratio and b) student-to-staff ratio.

1. Full-time retention rate
2. 6-year Graduation rate - Bachelor's degree within 150% of normal time
3. Default Rate
4. Percent of alumni still with debt

### Suggestions

Based on our data analysis and campus community feedback, the following items were suggested.

1. The core expenses per student headcount (HC) needs to be considered.
2. More time should be provided to further analyze multi-campus, student housing, graduate programs, etc.
3. Other institutions with open-access missions in the Northeast region should be considered as potential peers.
4. Institutions excluded in the Hanover tool should be informed to UMA for comparison with our existing lists of peer institutions.

## REPORT

### Filters

When selecting the categories that define UMA, there were no peer institutions. Therefore, the selection criteria were relaxed for some filters (Appendix A).

1. Category of Institution: Degree-granting, primarily baccalaureate or above
2. Degree of Urbanization: any City, Rural, Suburb, or Town
3. Carnegie Degree Classification [Basic]: Baccalaureate Colleges: Diverse Fields
4. Carnegie Degree Classification [Size and Setting]: Very Small, Small, or Medium (size) Four-year, primarily non residential
5. Carnegie Degree Classification [Undergraduate Profile]: Four-year, full-time, inclusive, higher transfer-in; Four-year, higher part-time; Four-year, medium full-time, inclusive, higher transfer-in
6. Institution Size [FTE Enrollment]: 1,000 - 4,999; 5,000 - 9,999
7. Sector of Institution: Public, 4-year or above

### Draft Peer Institutions

The above filtration provided 14 peer institutions. Through our selection process, which involved extended data analysis as well as discussions at the Executive Leadership Team, Provost Staff, two faculty representatives, and campus community feedback, we carefully selected seven (7) draft peer institutions.

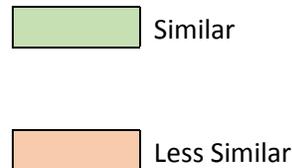
<i>Institution</i>	<i>Similarity Score</i>
Rogers State University (ID 207661)	0.11246
Bluefield State College (ID 237215)	0.11716
Lewis-Clark State College (ID 142328)	0.12292
Montana State University-Northern (ID 180522)	0.12947
Indiana University-Kokomo (ID 151333)	0.14850
Dickinson State University (ID 200059)	0.17640
University of Hawaii-West Oahu (ID 141981)	0.18418

### Similarity Score Breakdown

1. The “overall” similarity score is generated from the 11 “subcategory” similarity scores. The smaller numbers indicate more similar to UMA.
2. UMA is *similar* to draft peers with regard to financial subcategories (i.e. “discount” and “endowment”), but *less similar* on the other important academic subcategories (e.g., “student demographics,” “distance education,” etc.).

Table 1. Similarity score subcategories

Categories	Average	Standard Deviation
(overall) peer score index	0.15849	0.03175
s-location and setting	0.00031	0.00053
s-academic	0.00127	0.00129
s-discount	0.00000	0.00001
s-relative size	0.00032	0.00037
s-revenue	0.00084	0.00065
s-student demo	0.00961	0.00578
s-student financial aid	0.00483	0.00228
s-body size	0.00309	0.00215
s-distance education	0.00289	0.00156
s-program	0.00296	0.00258
s-endowment	0.00000	0.00000



Source: Hanover tool, Peer Raw Data for the original 14 peer institutions

### Peer Selection Process

**Filtration:** When selecting the categories that define UMA, there were no peer institutions found. Therefore, the filters were relaxed to bring 14 institutions that appear “somewhat” similar to UMA (Appendix A).

**Campus Discussion:** The Director of Institutional Research and Assessment led the data analysis and discussed findings with the Executive Leadership Team as well as Provost Staff. He also collaborated with the Chief Business Officer and two faculty representatives on extensive data analysis and reporting. The IR director also created short explanation videos and a survey to collect campus community feedback.

**Final Selection:** The 14 “somewhat” similar institutions had substantively different student characteristics (to be addressed in the next section on Key Parameters section). Therefore, the Executive Leadership Team deliberately narrowed the number of the draft peer institutions based on the data analysis and community feedback (Appendix B).

1. CUNY Medgar Evers College, CUNY York College, and Harris-Stowe State University, were removed because they were at the bottom of the list regarding the “overall” similarity score (unweighted) and also their locations are large cities in IPEDS.
2. The University of Maine at Fort Kent (UMFK) was removed because: a) the large percentage of part-time students is due to the early college cohorts and b) the large percentage of adult learners is attributed to the sizable RN-BSN program. These factors have been verified after the consultation with the Associate Director of Institutional Research at UMFK.
3. Colorado Mesa University, Purdue University-North Central Campus, and The University of Montana-Western were removed based on the smaller percentages of a) part-time students, b) adult learners, c) Pell grant recipients, and d) students exclusively in distance education. We consider these variables are very important to UMA when selecting peer institutions.

### Student Characteristics - Key Parameters for UMA

Regardless of the “overall” similarity score, UMA is substantively different from the draft peer institutions regarding the following student characteristics, which might have some implications on student success indicators.

Table 2. Key parameters of student characteristics at UMA

Data Fields	UMA	Draft Peer Average	Difference
Part-time enrollment as percentage of total enrollment, %	64.5%	35.4%	29.1%
Percent of enrollment age of 25 or older, %	64.8%	32.7%	32.1%
Percent of full-time first-time undergraduates awarded Pell grants, %	70%	45.9%	24.1%
Percent of undergraduate students enrolled exclusively in distance education courses, %	42%	16.3%	25.7%

Source: Hanover tool: Institution Values (for Export) of the 7 draft peer institutions

Although not included in the Hanover dataset, the following items are also key parameters for UMA

1. Multi-campus
2. Student housing
3. Graduate programs

### Student Success Indicators

Compared to the draft peer institutions, UMA is challenged with regard to the following data fields due to the aforementioned student characteristics.

Table 3. Student success indicators

Data Fields	UMA	Draft Peer Average	Difference
Full-time retention rate, %	56%	61.4%	-5.4%
6-year Graduation rate - Bachelor's degree within 150% of normal time	12%	25.7%	-13.7%
Default Rate, %	18.7%	11.0%	7.7%
Percent of alumni still with debt, %	18.8%	11.0%	7.7%

Source: Hanover tool: Institution Values (for Export) of the 7 draft peer institutions

In addition, the following data fields suggest that UMA is understaffed compared to the draft peer institutions.

Table 4. Ratios for student-to-faculty and student-to-staff

Data Fields	UMA	Draft Peer Average	Difference
Student-to-faculty ratio	16	15.14	0.86
Student-to-staff ratio	8	6.86	1.14

Source: Hanover tool: Institution Values (for Export) of the 7 draft peer institutions

## Financial Analysis

1. UMA has the highest percentage of part-time student enrollment among the draft peers.
2. UMA's total core expenses per FTE is lower than the peer average by \$532. When the figures are recalculated per student headcount (HC), UMA's total core expenses become lower than the peer average by \$2,848 (complete tables in Appendix C).

Table 5. Core expenses by student full-time equivalent (FTE) and student headcount (HC)

Data Fields	UMA	Peer Average	Difference
Grand Total Student Full-time Equivalent (FTE)	2939	2655	284
Grand total Student Headcount (HC)	4683	3498	1185
Instructional expenses per FTE	\$5,893.16	\$7,944.68	-\$2,051.52
Instructional expenses per HC	\$3,698.48	\$6,215.49	-\$2,517.01
Total core expenses per FTE	\$15,495.41	\$16,027.71	-\$532.30
Total core expenses per HC	\$9,724.75	\$12,573.69	-\$2,848.94

Source: IPEDS Finance Data, Public institutions - GASB 34/35, FY2015 of the 7 draft peer institutions

UMA had the smallest instructional expenses among the draft peer institutions due to the highest percentage of part-time instructional staff.

Table 6. Percentage of part-time instructional staff

Data Fields	UMA	Peer Average	Difference
Grand total Full-time Instructional staff	87	96	-9
Grand total Part-time Instructional staff	173	80	93
Percentage of part-time instructional staff	66.5%	44.2%	22.4%

Source: IPEDS Human Resources Data of the 7 draft peer institutions, Fall 2015

## Suggestions

1. Recognizing that UMA has the largest percentage of part-time students among the draft peer institutions, core expenses per student headcount (HC) should be considered.
2. Due to time constraints, we were unable to further analyze the a) multiple-campus, b) student housing capacity, and c) the size of graduate programs of the draft peer institutions. A more comprehensive analysis beyond the Hanover data would help our campus stakeholders to better understand the similarities as well as differences.
3. Recognizing the dissimilarity of student characteristics based on the Hanover data, we are interested in further analyzing institutional data with other institutions, including universities that share a similar mission with UMA (e.g., Charter Oak College in CT, Granite State College, NH, Johnson State College, VT, and community colleges that offer sizable baccalaureate degree programs).
4. In the Hanover tool, some institutions were excluded based on missing data. We are interested in knowing those missing institutions to compare with our existing lists of peer institutions.

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix A: Detailed Explanation of Filtrations regarding Limited Number of Peer Institutions

Appendix B: Descriptive Statistics for Narrowing the Number of Draft Peer Institutions

Appendix C: Financial Analysis of Core Expenses by Student Full-time Equivalent as well as Student Headcount

Appendix D: Campus Community Feedback

Appendix E: Contributors

## Appendix A:

### Detailed Explanation of Filtrations regarding Limited Number of Peer Institutions

By setting the filters in accordance to the UMA categories, the number of peer institutions becomes limited.

#### *Carnegie Classification 2015: Basic*

- UMA is “Baccalaureate Colleges: Diverse Fields.”
- By selecting the category, the number of peer institutions becomes 14.

#### *Carnegie classification 2015: Undergraduate Profile*

- UMA is “four-year, higher part-time.”
- Selecting this category, while keeping the Carnegie Basic category as “Baccalaureate Colleges: Diverse Fields”, reduces the number of peer institutions to 1.

#### *Degree of Urbanization*

- UMA is “Town: Distant.”
- Selecting this category, while keeping the Carnegie Basic category as “Baccalaureate Colleges: Diverse Fields” and the Carnegie Undergraduate Profile as the default setting (i.e. selecting three additional non-UMA categories), reduces the number of peer institutions to 1.

#### *FTE Enrollment*

- UMA is “1,000 - 4,999.”
- Selecting this category, while keeping the Carnegie Basic category as “Baccalaureate Colleges: Diverse Fields” and the Carnegie Undergraduate Profile as the default setting (i.e. selecting three additional non-UMA categories), reduces the number of peer institutions to 10.

## Appendix B:

### Descriptive Statistics for Narrowing the Number of Draft Peer Institutions

The four institutions below were removed based on substantively different student characteristics from UMA and also within the original 14 draft peer institutions.

University of Maine at Fort Kent (ID 161235)

Summary: The nature of the following data fields are quite different from that of UMA.

- Part-time enrollment as percentage of total enrollment, %
  - 62.6% (the percentage seems to be derived from a large proportion of early college students, unlike UMA's adult learners).
- Percent of enrollment age of 25 or older, %
  - 33.0% (the large percentage of adult learners is attributed to the sizable RN-BN programs.)
- Number of Campuses
  - One (1)

Purdue University-North Central Campus (ID 152266)

Summary: While the percentage of part-time students relatively comparable, a large majority of them are traditional-age students from a moderately selective admission with little transfer-in.

- Percent admitted - total, % (Column G)
  - 48% (i.e. not "open access" institution)
- Percent of enrollment age of 25 or older, %
  - 14.90% (the smallest percentage in the peer group)
- Transfer-in degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate enrollment as percentage of total enrollment, %
  - 3.77% (the smallest percentage in the peer group)
- Number of Campuses
  - Two (2)

The University of Montana-Western (ID 180692)

Summary: While open-access, the high retention and graduation rates with a large majority of full-time students who are less financially vulnerable.

- Part-time enrollment as percentage of total enrollment, %
  - 16.70% (the second smallest percentage in the group)
- Percent of enrollment age of 25 or older, %
  - 19.40% (a smaller percentage in the group)
- Percent of full-time first-time undergraduates awarded Pell grants, %
  - 38% (the second smallest percentage in the group)
- Full-time retention rate, %
  - 79% (the largest in the group)
- 6-year Graduation rate - Bachelor's degree within 150% of normal time
  - 45% (the largest in the group)

Colorado Mesa University (ID 127556)

Summary: While some student characteristics were somewhat comparable to Dickinson State University, Colorado Mesa University had a lower percentage of exclusively distance education students than Dickinson State University.

- Total enrollment
  - 9,448 (the largest in the group)
- Percent of enrollment age of 25 or older, %
  - 21.90% (a relatively smaller percentage in the group.)
- Transfer-in degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate enrollment as percentage of total enrollment, %
  - 6.20% (the third smallest percentage in the peer group)
- Number of Campuses
  - Three (3)

Table 7. Descriptive analysis of student characteristics

Institution	Similarity Score	Percent admitted - total, %	Total enrollment	Part-time enrollment as percentage of total enrollment, %	Percent of enrollment age of 25 or older, %	Transfer-in degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate enrollment as percentage of total enrollment, %	Percent of full-time first-time undergraduates awarded Pell grants, %	Percent of undergraduate students enrolled exclusively in distance education courses, %
<b>University of Maine at Augusta (ID 161217)</b>	0	100	4,683	64.50%	64.80%	12.73%	70	42
Rogers State University (ID 207661)	0.11246	82	4,081	39.20%	33.00%	12.15%	52	17
Bluefield State College (ID 237215)	0.11716	77	1,486	18.10%	36.30%	10.16%	64	12
Lewis-Clark State College (ID 142328)	0.12292	99	3,633	37.40%	36.40%	11.01%	51	14
University of Maine at Fort Kent (ID 161235)	0.12764	89	1,559	62.60%	31.60%	13.21%	45	32
Montana State University-Northern (ID 180000)	0.12947	100	1,234	28.70%	34.10%	11.35%	43	19
Purdue University-North Central Campus (ID 142328)	0.14605	48	6,158	59.90%	14.90%	3.77%	44	2
Indiana University-Kokomo (ID 151333)	0.14850	71	4,090	46.10%	23.30%	5.99%	44	4
Dickinson State University (ID 200059)	0.17640	93	1,317	32.00%	22.80%	11.09%	35	20
The University of Montana-Western (ID 180000)	0.17730	100	1,403	16.70%	19.40%	9.34%	38	7
Colorado Mesa University (ID 127556)	0.17829	83	9,448	23.20%	21.90%	6.20%	40	5
University of Hawaii-West Oahu (ID 141981)	0.18418	70	2,692	46.60%	43.00%	20.69%	32	28

Colour coding of student characteristics

Comparable
  Fairly Different
  Distinctively Different
  Different Data Content

Source: Hanover tool: Institution Values (for Export) of the 11 draft peer institutions

## Appendix C:

### Financial Analysis of Core Expenses by Student Full-time Equivalent as well as Student Headcount

#### Definition of Core Expenses:

Total expenses for the essential education activities of the institution. Core expenses for public institutions reporting under GASB standards include expenses for instruction, research, public service, academic support, student services, institutional support, *operation and maintenance of plant, depreciation, scholarships and fellowships*, interest and other operating and nonoperating expenses. Core expenses for FASB (primarily private, not-for-profit and for-profit) institutions include expenses on instruction, research, public service, academic support, student services, institutional support, net grant aid to students, and other expenses. For both FASB and GASB institutions, core expenses exclude expenses for auxiliary enterprises (e.g., bookstores, dormitories), hospitals, and independent operations.

Source: <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/VisGlossaryAll.aspx>

Table 8. Core expenses by student full-time equivalent (FTE)

Data Fields	UMA	Peer Average	Variance
Student FTE Grand Total	2939	2655	284
Instructional expenses per FTE	\$5,893.16	\$7,944.68	-\$2,051.52
Research expenses per FTE	\$36.41	\$140.70	-\$104.29
Public service per FTE	\$939.44	\$184.95	\$754.48
Academic support per FTE	\$2,405.92	\$1,901.59	\$504.33
Institutional support per FTE	\$1,749.57	\$2,433.53	-\$683.96
Student services per FTE	\$1,790.06	\$2,279.47	-\$489.40
Other core expenses per FTE	\$2,680.84	\$1,142.79	\$1,538.06
Total core expenses per FTE	\$15,495.41	\$16,027.71	-\$532.30

Source: IPEDS Finance Data, Public institutions - GASB 34/35, FY2015 of the 7 draft peer institutions

Table 9. Core expenses by student headcount (HC)

Data Fields	UMA	Peer Average	Variance
Student HC Grand Total	4683	3498	1185
Instructional expenses per HC	\$3,698.48	\$6,215.49	-\$2,517.01
Research expenses per HC	\$22.85	\$117.20	-\$94.35
Public service per HC	\$589.58	\$145.52	\$444.06
Academic support per HC	\$1,509.93	\$1,469.10	\$40.83
Institutional support per HC	\$1,098.01	\$1,898.61	-\$800.60
Student services per HC	\$1,123.43	\$1,821.16	-\$697.73
Other core expenses per HC	\$1,682.47	\$906.60	\$775.86
Total core expenses per HC	\$9,724.75	\$12,573.69	-\$2,848.94

Source: IPEDS Finance Data, Public institutions - GASB 34/35, FY2015 of the 7 draft peer institutions

## Appendix D:

### Campus Community Feedback

The Director of Institutional Research and Assessment prepared short explanation videos about the project of selecting draft peer institutions. All campus community members were encouraged to provide their feedback through a survey.

#### Email Announcements

From: University of Maine at Augusta <uma.info@maine.edu>

**Date: Thu, Oct 5, 2017 at 9:15 AM**

Subject: Reminder - Your Feedback on Selecting Draft Peer Institutions for UMA

To: UMA-EMPLOYEES@lists.maine.edu

Dear UMA colleagues,

I would like to encourage you to provide feedback on selecting UMA's draft peer institutions.

***The due date is this Friday, October 6th. Please see the initial message below for the videos and feedback survey.***

There are three updates:

1. As of today, there have been 13 survey responses with about 30 video views.
2. A draft narrative (<https://goo.gl/qxqAGb>) has been created to provide some explanations of our draft list of UMA peer institutions.
3. An extended financial analysis (<https://goo.gl/xMQwSG>) has revealed that UMA's total core expenses per FTE seem comparable to our draft peers. However, when the figures are recalculated by per student headcount (HC), UMA's total core expenses appear drastically lower than our draft peers.

Should you have any questions or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact Hirosuke Honda, the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment at [Hirosuke.Honda@maine.edu](mailto:Hirosuke.Honda@maine.edu) or 621-3216.

Sincerely,

Joseph Szakas, Ph.D.  
Vice President of Academic Affairs/Provost  
University of Maine at Augusta

From: University of Maine at Augusta <[uma.info@maine.edu](mailto:uma.info@maine.edu)>

**Date: Fri, Sep 29, 2017 at 12:47 PM**

Subject: Your Feedback on Selecting Draft Peer Institutions for UMA

To: [UMA-EMPLOYEES@lists.maine.edu](mailto:UMA-EMPLOYEES@lists.maine.edu)

Dear UMA colleagues,

The University of Maine System has recently provided each campus with the Hanover Research tool to select draft peer institutions, which would subsequently be used for a funding mechanism.

Therefore, I would like to share the preliminary analysis of selecting UMA peer institutions and welcome your feedback.

#### Materials

The first and second videos illustrate the methodology (therefore, optional). *In order to provide your feedback*, please watch the third and fourth videos **highlighted in yellow**.

#### 1. Hanover Tool: Filters and Categories (4:44)

This video illustrates the filter functions and associated data definitions.

<https://youtu.be/WxUVZRAQ00c>

Reference

Degree of Urbanization ([https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/ruraled/exhibit\\_a.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/ruraled/exhibit_a.asp))

Carnegie Classification - Definitions (<http://carnegieclassifications.iu.edu/definitions.php>)

#### 2. Hanover Tool: Weights (3:05)

This video illustrates the weight function and its limit.

<https://youtu.be/lc3tDe2Nv1k>

#### 3. Hanover Project: Institutional Data Analysis (6:41)

<https://youtu.be/dcO36TcKJhE>

Reference

Excel File (<https://goo.gl/Zz6P3v>)

#### 4. Hanover Project: Two Lists of Peer Institutions (3:12)

<https://youtu.be/rAZikYLmD-E>

#### Feedback Form

The UMS suggested selecting at least 6 or 7 peer institutions and probably no more than 15 peers.

Please provide your feedback on the draft peer institutions through a brief survey *by next Friday, October 6th*.

<https://www.research.net/r/draft-peers>

#### Contact

Should you have any questions or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact Hirosuke Honda, the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment at [Hirosuke.Honda@maine.edu](mailto:Hirosuke.Honda@maine.edu) or 621-3216.

Sincerely,

Joseph Szakas, Ph.D.

Vice President of Academic Affairs/Provost

University of Maine at Augusta

### Summary Results of Campus Community Feedback

The survey was administered from Friday, September 29th to Friday, October 6th.

1. Over 50 video views and 27 survey responses
2. A large majority (85%) responded that the explanation was “very clear” or “clear.”
3. Over two-thirds (70.4%) responded that the “short list 7” institutions seem comparable to UMA.

Note: The detailed survey result is available upon request.

### **Appendix E:**

#### **Contributors**

Rebecca M. Wyke, President

Joseph Szakas, Vice President of Academic Affairs/Provost

Timothy Brokaw, Chief Business Officer

Hirosuke Honda, Director of Institutional Research and Assessment

Kenneth C. Elliott, Professor of Psychology

Lester French Jr, Assistant Professor of Mathematics

Leslie W. McCormick, Senior Research Analyst