



STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SYSTEM
NACOGDOCHES, TEXAS

Aspirational Peer Institution Selection

Aspirational Peer Evaluation Sources and Methodology

National data sources are evaluated to determine an appropriate aspiration peer group for Stephen F. Austin State University (SFA), a member of the University of Texas System. National information was obtained through the federal Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) National Center for Education Statistics reporting system. The most recent available data are used for this evaluation.

Institutional sector, degree-granting status, highest degree offered, institutional category, Carnegie classification, institutional size, and degree of urbanization (locale) are the initial screening information observed. A summary of criteria is noted below for more details. Forty-seven (47) institutions meet the initial evaluation criteria.

Using the most recent headcount enrollment available, 37 institutions reported headcount higher than SFA. One institution reported headcount in excess of 100,000 and was eliminated as a clear outlier to all other institutions in the evaluation. The median headcount for remaining 36 institutions is 18,183 and the mean headcount is 19,372. Fourteen of the 36 institutions report a headcount one standard deviation below the group mean and nine institutions indicate a headcount one standard deviation above the mean, leaving a total of 23 institutions as a possible national aspirational peer set.

SFA consistently identifies a student population of greater than 90% Texas residents. To most closely align a peer set with SFA, the percentage of first-time in-state undergraduates is evaluated across the 23 possible aspirational peers. The SFA current percentage of first-time in-state undergraduates is 98%. Considering similar aspirational peers with 90% or more first-time in-state undergraduates yields a set of nine primary aspirational peers. Four more of the 23 potential peers are added due to key data element matches such as Carnegie class, close first-time in-state undergraduate percentage, and Pell awards percentage. Based on this evaluation, the thirteen SFA Aspirational Peer Institutions are:

Appalachian State University
Binghamton University
Bowling Green State University-Main Campus
Central Michigan University
Eastern Kentucky University
Fort Hays State University
Georgia Southern University
Grand Valley State University
Illinois State University
Northern Illinois University
Sam Houston State University
Tarleton State University
University of North Georgia

Note: SFA uses a variety of peer groups for different purposes. Other comparison group examples include Texas public university peers, state accountability group peers, system peers, and top admitted student competitor peers.

Initial Aspirational Peer Criteria Screening Summary

The following are the initial evaluation criteria used to screen aspirational peers. SFA values at the time of evaluation data reporting are noted in ***bold/italics***. Forty-seven institutions meet the initial screening criteria.

Sector

Public, 4-year or above; Private not-for-profit, 4-year or above

Degree-granting status

Degree-granting

Highest degree offered

Doctor's degree - professional practice; ***Doctor's degree - research/scholarship***; Doctor's degree - research/scholarship and professional practice (Due to new categorizations, SFA recently change to this grouping.)

Institutional category

Degree-granting, primarily baccalaureate or above

Carnegie Classification 2021: Basic

Master's Colleges & Universities: Larger Programs; Doctoral/Professional Universities; Doctoral Universities: High Research Activity; Doctoral Universities: Very High Research Activity

Institution size category

10,000 - 19,999; 20,000 and above

Degree of urbanization (Locale)

Town: Fringe; Town: Distant; ***Town: Remote***; Rural: Fringe; Rural: Distant; Rural: Remote; Suburb: Small; Suburb: Midsize

Degree of Urbanization (local) description reference

Description: Locale codes identify the geographic status of a school on an urban continuum ranging from "large city" to "rural." They are based on a school's physical address. The urban-centric locale codes introduced in this file are assigned through a methodology developed by the U.S. Census Bureau's Population Division. Locale codes are based on U.S. Census Bureau, 2023 TIGER/Line Shapefiles

City: Large: Territory inside an urbanized area and inside a principal city with population of 250,000 or more.

City: Midsize: Territory inside an urbanized area and inside a principal city with population less than 250,000 and greater than or equal to 100,000.

City: Small: Territory inside an urbanized area and inside a principal city with population less than 100,000.

Suburb: Large: Territory outside a principal city and inside an urbanized area with population of 250,000 or more.

Suburb: Midsize: Territory outside a principal city and inside an urbanized area with population less than 250,000 and greater than or equal to 100,000.

Suburb: Small: Territory outside a principal city and inside an urbanized area with population less than 100,000.

Town: Fringe: Territory inside an urban cluster that is less than or equal to 10 miles from an urbanized area.

Town: Distant: Territory inside an urban cluster that is more than 10 miles and less than or equal to 35 miles from an urbanized area.

Town: Remote: Territory inside an urban cluster that is more than 35 miles of an urbanized area.

Rural: Fringe: Census-defined rural territory that is less than or equal to 5 miles from an urbanized area, as well as rural territory that is less than or equal to 2.5 miles from an urban cluster.

Rural: Distant: Census-defined rural territory that is more than 5 miles but less than or equal to 25 miles from an urbanized area, as well as rural territory that is more than 2.5 miles but less than or equal to 10 miles from an urban cluster.

Rural: Remote: Census-defined rural territory that is more than 25 miles from an urbanized area and is also more than 10 miles from an urban cluster.

American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the Virgin Islands, were not assigned a locale code because the geographic and governmental structures of these entities do not fit the definitional scheme used to derive the code.