

Kennesaw State University's Peer & Aspirational Comparator Universities

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Metropolitan universities, such as Kennesaw State University, constitute a distinctive type of institution of higher education that has expanded significantly since the 1950s. Metropolitan universities are substantially different from traditional research universities. A decade ago, Ernest Lynton in his *Forward to Metropolitan Universities* (Johnson & Bell, 1995) defined metropolitan universities as follows:

A new breed of American universities, the metropolitan university is an institutional model committed to be responsive to the knowledge needs of its surrounding region, and dedicated to create active links between campus, community, and commerce...It offers undergraduate as well as graduate programs not only at traditional times and places, but also in ways which make higher education accessible to older students and working professionals...many of its students attend more than one institution as they move toward a baccalaureate degree, and most of them take more than four years to complete this process... A metropolitan university contains a number of professional schools which provide both preparatory and continuing education for practitioners. That task is quite different from the preparation of future scholars and researchers which is the focus of graduate and professional education in the traditional research universities...metropolitan universities engage in applied research and in professional outreach which address the complex issues of its surrounding communities (pp xi-xii).

Typically located in a major metropolitan area, metropolitan universities are different from traditional institutions of higher education in that they are deeply engaged in: a) educating and serving diverse and nontraditional-age as well as traditional-age undergraduates; b) focusing on professionally-oriented degree programs as well as programs in the arts and sciences; c) honoring applied as well as basic research interests; and d) collaborating extensively with practicing professionals and organizations in the communities they serve, locally as well as globally. Metropolitan universities typically have extensive evening and weekend as well as weekday program accessibility. Such characterizations describe Kennesaw State University very well.

Ideally, KSU's peer and aspirational comparators should be metropolitan universities that share these characteristics and orientations. It should also be noted that as KSU's campus housing facilities continue to expand, an increasing proportion of the undergraduate student body will become residential and traditional-age. Furthermore, as the population and demographic characteristics of the area in which the university is located continue to evolve, KSU will continue to grow in its diversity of minority and international students. As KSU continues to expand its master's and doctoral degree programs, it will evolve into a metropolitan university whose graduate programs are highly coexistent with its

undergraduate programs and whose doctoral program focus shifts from a limited array of professional degrees into a comprehensive array of doctoral offerings that are professions dominant. Like Greater Metropolitan Atlanta, KSU's exceptional enrollment growth is projected to continue well into the future. The choice of peer and aspirational comparators reflects these established trends for KSU's continuing development as a major metropolitan university.

Peer and Aspirational Comparator Selection Process

In Fall 2008, KSU's president formed a small task force of senior faculty and academic administrators, headed by the Provost, to identify KSU's aspirational and peer comparators. After brainstorming a list of potential comparator institutions located throughout the nation, the characteristics of those institutions were systematically analyzed using the detailed descriptions of the most recent 2004 Carnegie Classification Categories (www.carnegiefoundation.org) and detailed 2007 IPEDS information (www.nces.ed.gov) for each potential comparator. Those data were subsequently considered in deliberations of the task force in concert with a qualitative content analysis of the mission statement, strategic plan, and Web site for selected institutions. The task force reached consensus on the identification of 12 aspirational metropolitan university comparators from its national pool of over 60 potential candidates. The task force also identified a preliminary list of peer comparators using this same process. That peer comparator list was considered tentative until it could be confirmed with the statistically derived list being prepared independently by the Central Office staff of the University System of Georgia (UGA).

A standardized quantitative process for the identification of peer comparators at each of the 34 USG institutions was initiated by the Chief Academic Officer & Executive Vice Chancellor for the Board of Regents in August 2008. For KSU, IPEDS data for a standard set of predetermined institutional characteristics for all Master's/Large and Doctoral Research Universities in the nation were subjected to a principal components analysis and cluster analysis by the USG's Office of Research & Policy Analysis. From the 191 institutions included in that analysis, a cluster of 43 universities were identified as being most similar to KSU based upon that statistical analysis of selected indicators. KSU officials were subsequently invited in October 2008 to select 10 to 20 institutions from that cluster that were most similar to the mission and characteristics of the institution. Those became KSU's peer comparators.

With the exception of the basic Carnegie Classification for each institution, the standard set of indicators and values used in the USG's statistical analysis did not include the recently developed 2004 Carnegie Classification Categories that reflect distinct institutional differences in the undergraduate and graduate instruction program, the enrollment profile, and the size and setting of the institution. Those detailed Carnegie Categories were considered important by KSU officials in their qualitative selection of peer comparators. Furthermore, since KSU is a metropolitan university that recently added doctoral education to its mission, KSU officials were also sensitive to the

importance of peer comparators having a metropolitan location/mission, serving substantial numbers of nontraditional age undergraduates, and offering doctoral programs. Not all Master's/Large or Doctoral Research Universities have those characteristics, including many of those listed in KSU's statistical cluster of potential peer comparators.

The qualitative judgments of KSU officials for the selection of peer comparators from the statistically derived cluster were informed by a systematic analysis of the detailed Carnegie Classification Categories of each institution. In addition, the geographic location of the institution relative to metropolitan statistical areas and the percentage of undergraduates over 24 years of age (IPEDS data reflecting nontraditional-age population differences) were considered in selection decisions. Similarly, mission statements and strategic plans published on each institution's Web site were reviewed for consistency with KSU's educational priorities and values. The systematic qualitative and quantitative processes for the identification of KSU's peer comparators reached satisfactory convergence for 16 institutions in the cluster. It is worth noting that the majority of the institutions listed in the statistical cluster were notably deficient as potential peers for KSU based upon this qualitative analysis.

Distinguishing KSU's Peer Metropolitan Universities from Its Aspirational Metropolitan Universities

Common characteristics of KSU's peer and aspirational metropolitan universities include the following (typically, but not universally):

- Location in a major metropolitan area
- Large 4-year, primarily nonresidential*
- A high undergraduate focus*
- A professions plus arts & sciences focus for undergraduates*
- A substantial population of nontraditional-age undergraduates
- Selective undergraduate admissions*
- A higher undergraduate transfer-in population*
- Diversity in the student body consistent with KSU's evolving demographics
- Substantial graduate program coexistence with undergraduate programs*
- Doctoral degree granting with a professions dominant focus
- Institutional mission statements, strategic plans, and historical overviews that emphasize high quality learning-centered education, student success, global learning and appreciation for diversity, community engagement and collaborative partnerships, leadership and distinctiveness, responsiveness to state and national needs, and creative scholarship and research that is applications-oriented as well as knowledge-building.

*As defined in the detailed 2004 Carnegie Classifications

Typically, but not universally, the characteristics that distinguish KSU and its peer metropolitan university comparators from aspirational metropolitan university comparators are summarized below using Carnegie Classification terminology:

Distinguishing Feature	Peer Characteristics	Aspirational Characteristics
General Carnegie Classification	Master's/Large or Doctoral Research University	Research University (High research activity)
Breadth of graduate program offerings relative to undergraduate	Some graduate program coexistence – fewer than half of the undergraduate programs have graduate program counterparts	High graduate program coexistence – more than half of the undergraduate programs have graduate program counterparts
Doctoral program offerings and graduates	Offers some doctoral programs with a total of less than 50 graduates per year	Offers many doctoral programs with a total of much more than 50 graduates per year
Doctoral program focus	Professional focus dominates in education, business, technology, and/or nursing/health professions	Comprehensive doctoral array -- professions dominant, but no MD programs
Fall Headcount Enrollment	Comparable to KSU's	Larger than KSU's
Full-time Undergraduate	Medium, 60-79%	High, 80+%

KSU's Metropolitan University and Carnegie Category Characteristics

Like KSU, many of the selected metropolitan peer and aspirational university comparators are relatively young institutions. Those relatively young and fast growing institutions reflect the emergence of the metropolitans as Lynton's new breed of American universities. KSU's current characteristics as defined in Carnegie Classification (2004) and IPEDS (2007) terms are as follows:

Kennesaw State University (est. 1963)
Metropolitan (Atlanta Area), 20,600 students, 89% undergraduate—30% over 24 years + primarily nonresidential + medium full-time + selective admissions + higher transfer-in, some graduate co-existence with two doctoral programs (education and business) and no doctoral graduates in 2006-2007, Master's/Large Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate business and education and undergraduate nursing dominant.

KSU's Peer Metropolitan University Comparators

California State University – Sacramento (est. 1947)

Metropolitan, 28,900 students, 84% undergraduate – 25% over 24 years + primarily nonresidential + medium full-time + inclusive rather than selective admissions, high graduate coexistence with one doctoral program (education) and no doctoral graduates in 2006-07, Master's/Large Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate business, education, and engineering dominant.

California State University, Fresno (est. 1911)

Metropolitan, 22,400 students, 86% undergraduate – 19% over 24 years + primarily nonresidential + high full-time + selective admissions + higher transfer-in, some graduate coexistence with several doctoral programs (education, physical therapy, forensic sciences) and 7 doctoral graduates in 2006-07, Master's/Large Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate business and health professions and graduate education dominant.

Illinois State University (est. 1857)

Metropolitan (Bloomington/Normal is a small MSA), 20,300 students, 87% undergraduate – 8% over 24 years + primarily residential + high full-time + selective admissions + higher transfer-in, high graduate coexistence with nearly a dozen doctoral programs (education dominant) and 49 doctoral graduates in 2006-07, Doctoral Research University Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate business, education and health professions dominant.

Oakland University (est. 1957)

Metropolitan (Detroit area), 18,800 students, 78% undergraduate – 21% over 24 years + primarily nonresidential + medium full-time + selective admissions + higher transfer-in, some graduate coexistence with over a dozen doctoral programs (health professions, engineering and education dominant) and 61 doctoral graduates in 2006-07, Doctoral Research University Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate education and business, and undergraduate nursing and engineering dominant.

Western Kentucky University (est. 1906)

Metropolitan (Bowling Green is a small MSA), 19,300 students, 86% undergraduate – 19% over 24 years + primarily residential + high full-time + selective admissions + higher transfer-in, some graduate coexistence with one doctoral program (education) and no doctoral graduates in 2006-07, Master's/Large Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate programs in education and business dominant.

San Francisco State University (est. 1899)

Metropolitan, 30,100 students, 83% undergraduate – 25% over 24 years + primarily nonresidential + medium full-time + selective admissions + higher transfer-in, high graduate coexistence with four doctoral programs (education and physical therapy) and

15 graduates in 2006-07, Master's/Large Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate business, education, and health professions dominant.

Missouri State University (est. 1905)

Metropolitan (Springfield is a small MSA), 19,300 students, 84% undergraduate – 13% over 24 years + primarily nonresidential + high full-time + selective admissions + higher transfer-in (+ low minority population), some graduate coexistence with two doctoral programs (audiology and education) and 8 doctoral graduates in 2006-07, Master's/Large Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate business, education, and health services dominant.

Middle Tennessee State University (est. 1911)

Metropolitan (Nashville area), 23,200 students, 90% undergraduate – 20% over 24 years + primarily nonresidential + high full-time + selective admissions + higher transfer-in, some graduate coexistence with a half-dozen doctoral programs (arts & sciences dominant – no education, business or nursing) and 19 doctoral graduates in 2006-07, Master's/Large Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate business and graduate education dominant.

Cleveland State University (est. 1964)

Metropolitan, 15,000 students, 63% undergraduate -- 37% over 24 years + primarily nonresidential + medium full-time + inclusive rather than selective admissions, high graduate coexistence with a half-dozen doctoral programs (professions dominant-- education) and 57 doctoral graduates plus 182 JDs in 2006-07, Doctoral Research University Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate business, education, engineering, and health professions dominant.

Towson University (est. 1860)

Metropolitan (Baltimore area), 19,800 students, 82% undergraduate – 12% over 24 years + primarily nonresidential + high full-time + selective admissions + higher transfer-in, some graduate coexistence with several doctoral programs (professions dominant) and 12 doctoral graduates in 2006-07, Master's/Large with undergraduate and graduate education, business and health professions dominant.

University of North Carolina at Charlotte (est. 1946)

Metropolitan, 22,600 students, 79% undergraduate – 19% over 24 years + primarily residential + high full-time + selective admissions + higher transfer-in, high graduate coexistence with over a dozen doctoral programs (professions dominant --education, engineering, business) and 48 doctoral graduates in 2006-07, Doctoral Research University Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate business and education dominant.

Eastern Michigan University (est. 1849)

Metropolitan (Detroit area), 22,800 students, 79% undergraduate – 28% over 24 years + primarily nonresidential + medium full-time + selective admissions + higher transfer-in, high graduate coexistence with a couple of doctoral programs (education and

psychology), and 18 doctoral graduates in 2006-07, Master's/Large Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate education and business dominant.

Portland State University (est. 1946)

Metropolitan, 25,000 students, 76% undergraduate – 39% over 24 years + primarily nonresidential + medium full-time + selective admissions + higher transfer-in, high graduate coexistence with over a dozen doctoral programs (professions dominant-- education) and 36 doctoral graduates in 2006-07, Doctoral Research University Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate business and graduate education dominant.

University of North Florida (est. 1965)

Metropolitan (Jacksonville), 16,400 students, 89% undergraduate – 22% over 24 years + primarily nonresidential + medium full-time + selective admissions + higher transfer-in, some graduate coexistence with three doctoral programs (education, nursing, & physical therapy) and 13 doctoral graduates in 2006-07, Master's/Large Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate business, education, and health professions dominant.

California State University, Fullerton (est. 1957)

Metropolitan (L.A. area), 37,100 students, 86% undergraduate – 22% over 24 years + primarily nonresidential + medium full-time + selective admissions + higher transfer-in, high graduate coexistence with one doctoral program (education) and no doctoral graduates in 2006-07, Master's/Large Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate business, education, and graduate engineering dominant.

University of Texas at San Antonio (est. 1969)

Metropolitan, 28,500 students, 87% undergraduate – 21% over 24 years + primarily nonresidential + high full-time + selective admissions + higher transfer-in, high graduate coexistence with a dozen doctoral programs (business, engineering, education dominant) and 46 doctoral graduates in 2006-07, Master's/Large Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate business and graduate education dominant.

KSU's Aspirational Metropolitan University Comparators

George Mason University (est. 1957)

Metropolitan (Washington, DC area), 30,300 students, 61% undergraduate--24% over 24 years + primarily nonresidential + medium full-time + selective admissions + higher transfer-in, high graduate program coexistence with nearly two dozen doctoral programs (professions dominant – biomedical, education, engineering, nursing, psychology) and 181 doctoral graduates in 2006-07, Research University (High research activity) Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate business, education, engineering, and health professions dominant.

Indiana University-Purdue University – Indianapolis (est. 1969)

Metropolitan, 29,900 students, 71% undergraduate--38% over 24 years + primarily nonresidential + medium-full-time + selective admissions + higher transfer-in, some graduate program coexistence with a dozen doctoral programs (professions dominant -- health professions, biomedical, and human services) and 68 doctoral graduates plus 95 DDS in 2006-07, Research University (High research activity) Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate business, health professions and education dominant.

University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee (est. 1885)

Metropolitan, 29,300 students, 83% undergraduate--19% over 24 years + primarily nonresidential + high full-time + selective admissions + higher transfer-in, high graduate program coexistence with nearly two dozen doctoral programs (professions dominant -- business, education, engineering, health professions) and 101 doctoral graduates in 2006-07, Research University (High research activity) Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate business, education and health professions dominant.

University of Texas – Arlington (est. 1895)

Metropolitan (Dallas/Fort Worth area), 24,900 students, 76% undergraduate--28% over 24 years + primarily nonresidential + medium full-time + selective admissions + higher transfer-in, high graduate program coexistence with over two dozen doctoral programs, (professions dominant – engineering, business, human services) and 124 doctoral graduates in 2006-07, Research University (High research activity) Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate business, engineering, health professions and graduate education and human services dominant.

Kent State University – Main Campus (est. 1910)

Metropolitan (Akron/Cleveland area), 22,800 students, 79% undergraduate--11% over 24 years + primarily residential + high full-time+ selective admissions + lower transfer-in, high graduate program coexistence with over three dozen doctoral programs (professions dominant – education, psychology heavy) and 136 doctoral graduates in 2006-07, Research University (High research activity) Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate business and education dominant.

University of North Carolina – Greensboro (est. 1891)

Metropolitan Greensboro is a midsize city, 18,600 students, 79% undergraduate--17% over 24 years + primarily residential + high full-time + selective admissions + higher transfer-in, high graduate program coexistence with nearly two dozen doctoral programs (professions dominant --education and psychology) and 74 doctoral graduates in 2006-07, Research University (High research activity) Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate business, education and health professions dominant.

University of California – Riverside (est. 1954)

17,200 students, 87% undergraduate--5% over 24 years + primarily residential + high full-time + selective admissions + lower transfer-in, high graduate program coexistence with over three dozen doctoral programs (professions dominant – biomedical, engineering, sciences) and 177 doctoral graduates in 2006-07, Research University (Very

High research activity) Carnegie Classification with undergraduate business and undergraduate and graduate sciences program graduates dominant.

University of Missouri – St. Louis (est. 1963)

Metropolitan, 15,500 students, 80% undergraduate--29% over 24 years + primarily nonresidential + medium full-time + selective admissions + higher transfer-in, high graduate program coexistence with a dozen doctoral programs (professions dominant-- education and sciences) and 52 doctoral graduates in 2006-07, Research University (High research activity) Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate business and education dominant.

Florida Atlantic University – Boca Raton (est. 1961)

Metropolitan (Southeast Florida), 26,200 students, 83% undergraduate – 33% over 24 years + primarily nonresidential + higher part-time, high graduate program coexistence with over a dozen doctoral programs (professions dominant – education) and 74 doctoral graduates in 2006-07, Research University (High research activity) Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate business and graduate education dominant.

University of North Texas (est. 1890)

Metropolitan (Dallas area), 34,700 students, 80% undergraduate—18% over 24 years + primarily nonresidential + medium full-time + selective admissions + lower transfer-in, high graduate coexistence with nearly five dozen doctoral programs (professions-dominant--education, business, psychology, music) and 196 doctoral graduates in 2006-07, Research University (High research activity) Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate business and graduate education dominant.

University of Memphis (est. 1912)

Metropolitan, 20,400 students, 78% undergraduate—31% over 24 years + primarily nonresidential + medium full-time + selective admissions + lower transfer-in, high graduate coexistence with nearly two dozen doctoral programs (professions dominant-- education, business, health professions, psychology) and 112 doctoral graduates plus 113 JDs in 2006-07, Research University (High research activity) Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate business, education, health professions and psychology dominant.

University of Central Florida (est. 1963)

Metropolitan, 48,400 students, 86% undergraduate—18% over 24 years + primarily nonresidential + medium full-time + selective admissions + higher transfer-in, high graduate coexistence with nearly two dozen doctoral programs (professions-dominant-- engineering, education, computer science, business) and 212 doctoral graduates in 2006-07, Research University (High research activity) Carnegie Classification with undergraduate and graduate business, education, engineering and health professions dominant.