



Identify and Rightsize Small Class Offerings

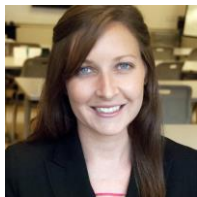
October 10, 2018

Academic Performance Solutions

Leading Today's Session



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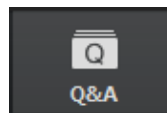
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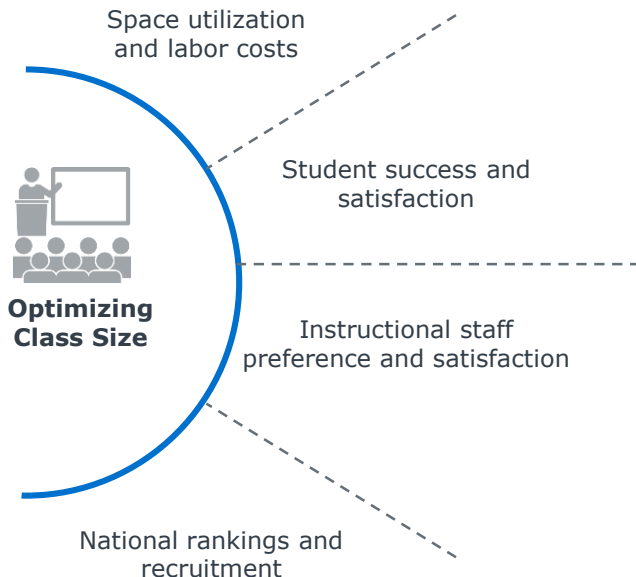
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Class Size Matters to Everyone

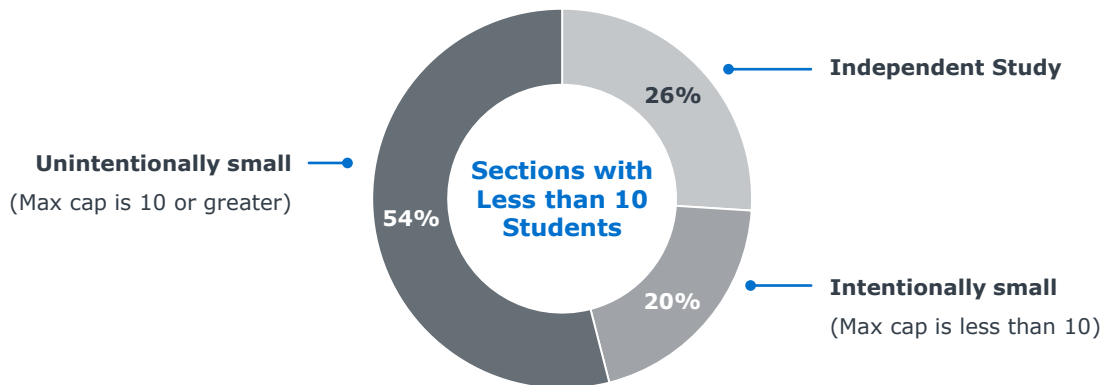


Class size is the most highly weighted faculty resource measure, at 8 percent. Schools score better the greater their proportions of smaller classes. Schools receive the most credit in this index for the proportion of [...] undergraduate classes with fewer than 20 students.

U.S. News and World Report, 2019

Are Our Smallest Classes Small by Design?

Almost a Quarter of Sections Have Fewer Than 10 Students



Are there opportunities to realign resources to better support institutional priorities?



1) Includes only sections of undergraduate courses with enrollment caps set at greater than zero and with greater than zero attempted student credit hours; AY 2017.
Weighted averages by total attempted student credit hours at the institution (n = 53).

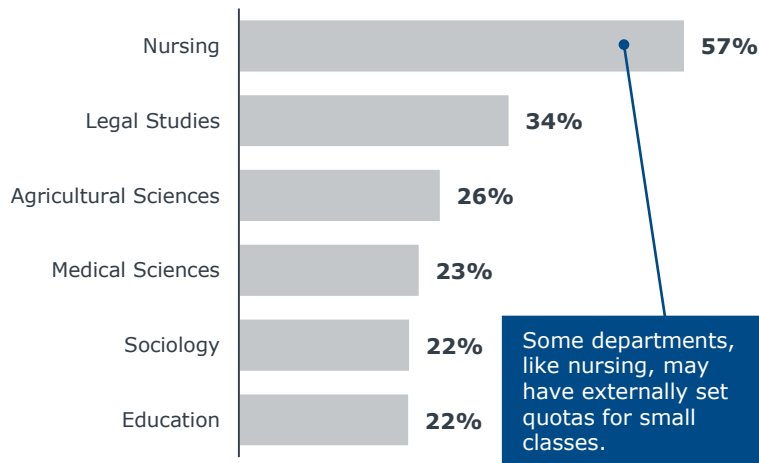
Small Classes, A Necessity, Offer Many Benefits

Ensuring Intentional Investments

Share of Small Sections That Are Intentionally Small, by Department¹

AY 2017

n = 53 institutions



Potential Pitfall: *Inconsistently Set Enrollment Caps*

The precision of fill-rate analyses—such as this one—are highly dependent on accurately set enrollment caps. Before proceeding, ensure they are reliably set.



Resource Available:
[Maximum Capacity Toolkit](#)

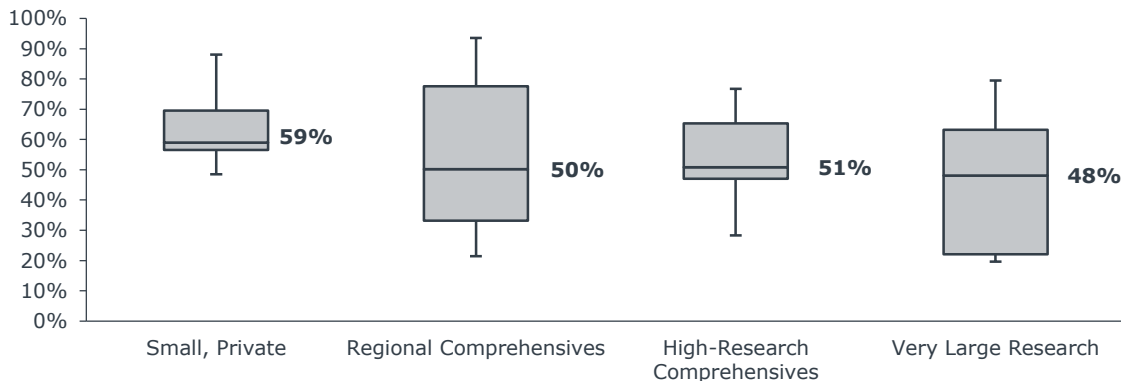
1) Includes only sections of undergraduate courses with enrollment caps set at greater than zero and with greater than zero attempted student credit hours; AY 2017. Weighted averages by total attempted student credit hours at the institution (n = 53).

But Most Small Classes Are Not Intentional

Share of Small Sections That Are Unintentionally Small, by Cohort¹

AY 2017

n = 53 institutions



Significant variation among institutions with no clear trend across cohorts

1) Includes only sections of undergraduate courses with enrollment caps set at greater than zero and with greater than zero attempted student credit hours; AY 2017. Weighted averages by total attempted student credit hours at the institution (n = 53).

Multiple Reasons Behind Low-Enrollment



Addressing Low-Enrollment Classes

1

New Offering

- Initiative to grow new program, but limited number of majors



Monitor demand

2

Lack of Student Demand

- Course not publicized
- Instructor reputed to be ineffective
- Course too specialized



Consider curriculum review and redesign

3

Excess Offerings

- Number of courses offered at level exceeds need
- Course offered too frequently



Consolidate sections



Resource Available: [Instructional Capacity Playbook](#)

Opportunities to Reallocate Resources

Limiting Excess Offerings

Consolidating Excess Course Sections

100-Level Business Course at a Small, Private University

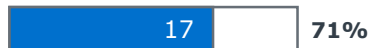
Excess Course Capacity

Max Enrollment = 24; Seat Utilization = 24%



Consolidated Sections

Max Enrollment = 24; Seat Utilization = 71%



Consolidating Single-Section Courses

Single-section courses with low fill rates may be able to be offered less frequently, rather than multiple terms each year. First consider the impact on students and faculty, since less frequent offerings may impact time to graduate and faculty engagement.

Disproportionate Impact on Resources

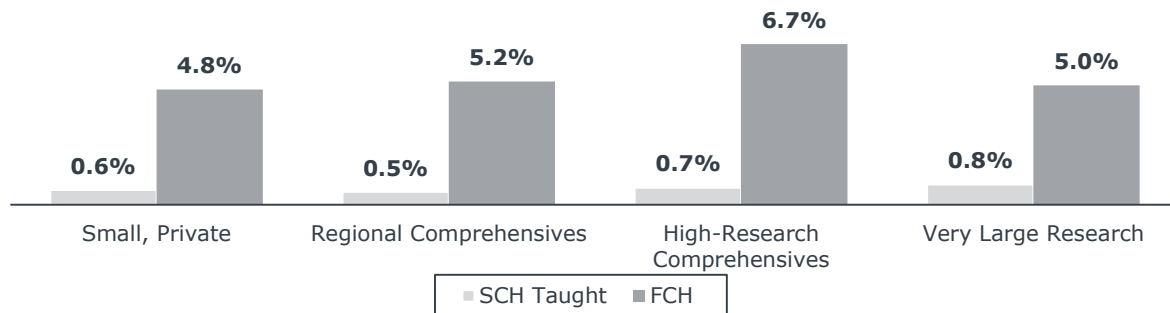
Independent Study Demands 6% of FCH, Results in Less than 1% of SCH

Independent Studies Across the APS Cohorts^{1,2}

AY 2017

n = 53 institutions

0.7% of Student Credit Hours Taught ➡ **5.5% of Faculty Credit Hours**



1) Includes only sections of undergraduate courses with enrollment caps set at greater than zero and with greater than zero attempted student credit hours; AY 2017.
Weighted averages by total attempted student credit hours at the institution (n = 53).

Optimize Investment in Individual Instruction

Incentivizing Faculty to Modify Independent Studies into Group Courses

Routinizing Independent Study Reviews

*Regular Reviews of
Independent Research Topics*

Faculty	Topic	Enrollment
Smith	Political Legacies of Founding Fathers	1
Smith	The Continental Congress	1
Smith	Women of the Revolutionary War	1
Jones	Innovations in Social Media	1
Smith	FDR and Public Works	1

Combined Course

"Exploring
Revolutionary
Politics"

Course Cap = 3

*Incentives for Faculty to
Consolidate Sections*



Travel gainsharing



Release buyout

Benefits for All Those Involved

By combining related courses, the institution encourages students to collaborate and engage in discussions, while simultaneously reducing the instructors' course loads.





% of Classes with Size <10

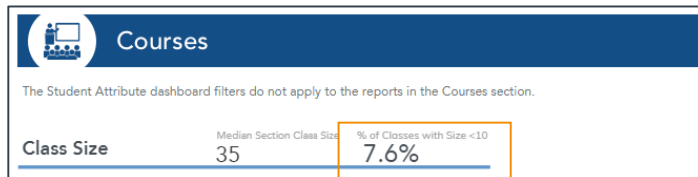
Find this report on the *Department Scorecard* tab

Your Next Steps in APS

How to Identify the Smallest Classes

1 Download the Report

The % Sections Class Size <10 report provides total capacity and enrollment for each section with fewer than 10 students



2 Review with Instructional Staff

For courses with a cap of 10 or less, document why the course is offered at the small size. For low-fill courses, discuss consolidation options.

KPI - Class Size < 10 = % of Sections w/Class Size < 10

Academic Term	Department	Course Code	Course Name	Course Ref	Total Enrollment	Total Capacity	Section Fill Rate (%)
2016-17 Fall	Sociology	SOC368	Masked SOC368	11941	2	10	20.0%
Spring	Sociology	SOC368	Masked SOC368	20645	1	15	6.7%
				20648	1	10	10.0%
Summer	Sociology	SOC368	Masked SOC368	32202	7	15	46.7%
				32210	6	15	40.0%
Section	Sociology	SOC337	Masked SOC337	31759	2	20	10.0%

3 Monitor Each Term

APS data is updated after the close of each term. Continue to review the data to identify new opportunities.



Appendix

Institutions Grouped into Four Cohorts



Using a machine learning method known as clustering, we grouped 57 APS members into four cohorts. Clustering is the process of grouping a set of observations (e.g., institutions) into meaningful, distinct groups (or clusters) of objects that share common characteristics. We used the following variables—gathered from the 2015-16 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)—to build our model: sector, basic Carnegie classification, total expenditures, and fall undergraduate enrollment.

Characteristics of the resulting cohorts are detailed below.

APS Benchmarking Cohort Distribution ($n = 57$)

Regional Comprehensive Institutions

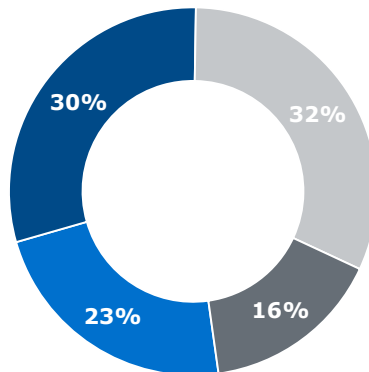
All are public institutions. All but one are master's colleges and universities.

- Median total expenditures: \$174 million.
- Median fall undergraduate enrollment: 9,500.

Small, Private Institutions

All are private, not-for-profit institutions. Eight are master's colleges and universities, and five are doctoral universities.

- Median total expenditures: \$130 million.
- Median fall undergraduate enrollment: 3,500.



High-Research Comprehensive Institutions

All are doctoral universities, most with higher research activity. All but one are public institutions.

- Median total expenditures: \$353 million.
- Median fall undergraduate enrollment: 11,700.

Very Large Research-Intensive Institutions

All are doctoral universities with the highest research activity. All but one are public institutions.

- Median total expenditures: \$1 billion.
- Median fall undergraduate enrollment: 23,400.



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