Support Budget Planning with Benchmark Data

Background

As academic leaders who are responsible for managing the budgets for their respective academic units, deans and department chairs can leverage Academic Performance Solutions (APS) platform data to better understand their resource allocations and make requests for additional support.

One helpful input into budget planning is benchmark data across comparable institutions for capacity and completion rate metrics, which can help indicate whether there is need for more instructional capacity or centralized student success efforts.

▶ Key Metric Definitions

Course and Section Fill Rate: The number of actual students enrolled in a term divided by the maximum capacity in a term

Completion Rate: The number of total earned student credit hours (SCH) in course in a term divided by the number of total attempted SCH

Two Approaches to Requesting Resources

Additional Faculty Lines to Support Your Academic Unit

- Demonstrate how your academic unit is operating at or beyond optimal instructional capacity, given student enrollment trends and demand
- Sample metrics: Total attempted SCH, 3-year change in attempted SCH, number of low-fill rate sections, benchmark comparison of fill rate and class size

Additional Central Resources to Support Broader Strategic Goals

- Demonstrate the need for central resources to support institutional objectives like student success
- Sample metrics: Median course completion rate, DFW rate, benchmark comparison of course completion rates

Additional Resources for Support

EAB Research

- **Instructional Capacity Playbook:** Best practice strategies for realigning resources to meet changing enrollment patterns
- **Course Completion Playbook:** Analyses and tools to improve course completion rates without reducing academic rigor

APS Tools

- **Platform Guides:** Step-by-step guides that help you navigate specific use cases in the APS platform, such as matching section offerings to demand
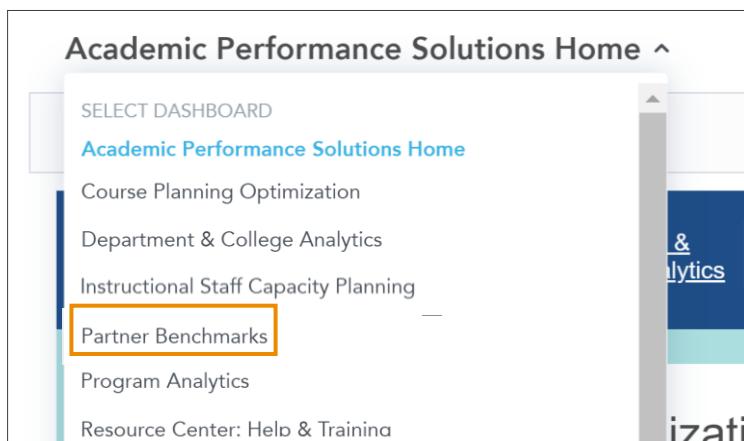
  Download them directly from the APS platform! Once logged into the platform, click on the Resource Center: Help & Training dashboard, then click on the How- To Guides tab.

 eab.com

How to: Support Budget Requests with APS Benchmarks

Use the steps below to leverage benchmark data in the APS platform to support your budget planning and resource allocation requests.

1 **Getting Started: Navigate to the Partner Benchmarks Dashboard and Set Your Filters**

On the APS Home Page or any dashboard in the APS platform, next to the name of the dashboard you are currently on, click on the arrow to open a drop-down menu. Click on the **APS Benchmarks dashboard.**

Academic Performance Solutions Home ^

SELECT DASHBOARD
Academic Performance Solutions Home
Course Planning Optimization
Department & College Analytics
Instructional Staff Capacity Planning
Partner Benchmarks
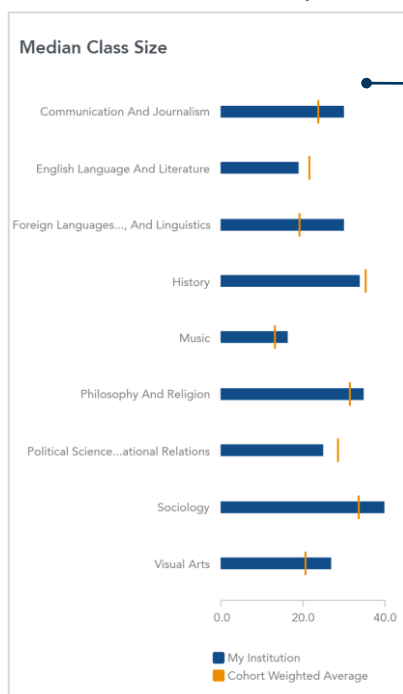Program Analytics
Resource Center: Help & Training

Click on the **Course Planning tab** and use the filters to refine your analysis. *Recommended filters: Choose Your College, Academic Year, Course Type, Term.*

Helpful Hints

- Click on the **Configuration Summary tab** to review mappings of your institution's departments to APS standardized benchmark departments.

- Use the **Choose Your College** filter to view metrics for specific academic units in your college.

- Set the **Academic Year** filter to the most recent academic year to ensure the metrics reflect the current state of your college or department.

- Remove course types that might skew course capacity data, such as *Individual Instruction, Practicum,* and *Studio.*

- Remove academic terms that might require separate analysis for instructional capacity, such as *Summer.*

2 **View the *Median Class Size* Chart**

On the **Course Planning tab**, use the chart on the left called **Median Class Size** to identify the median class size of each benchmarked department to understand where your institution's departments have smaller median class sizes than peers' departments.

Median Class Size

Communication And Journalism
English Language And Literature
Foreign Languages..., And Linguistics
History
Music
Philosophy And Religion
Political Science...ational Relations
Sociology
Visual Arts

0.0   20.0   40.0

■ My Institution
■ Cohort Weighted Average

For example, a department with larger median class sizes than the benchmark, such as Communications and Journalism, may be able to demonstrate a **need for additional instructional capacity**.
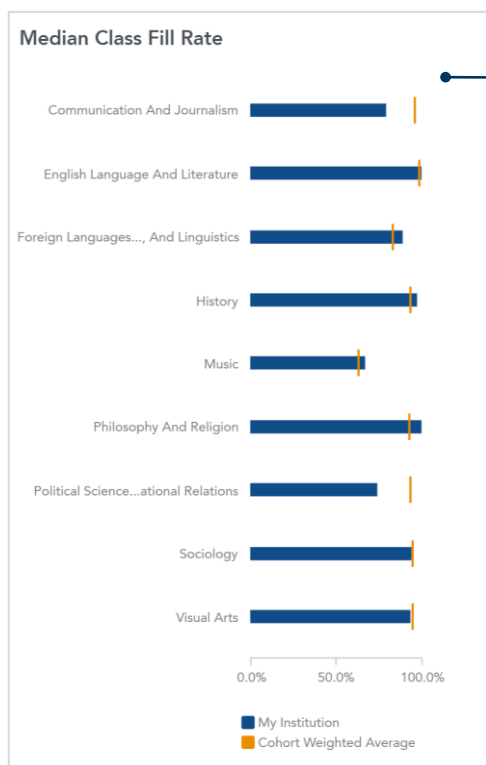
Potential Next Step
Support a Request for Additional Instructional Capacity

In the **Department & College Analytics dashboard**, navigate to the **Class Capacity Utilization tab**. Use the **Trends in Median Class Size and Class Capacity by Course Type** chart to view class size trends.

Source: Academic Performance Solutions.

3 **View the *Median Class Fill Rate* Chart**

Use the chart to the right to identify the median class fill rate of each benchmarked department to understand where your institution's departments are more full when compared to peers' departments.

For example, a department with larger median class fill rate than the benchmark, such as Philosophy and Religion, may be able to demonstrate a **need for additional instructional capacity**.
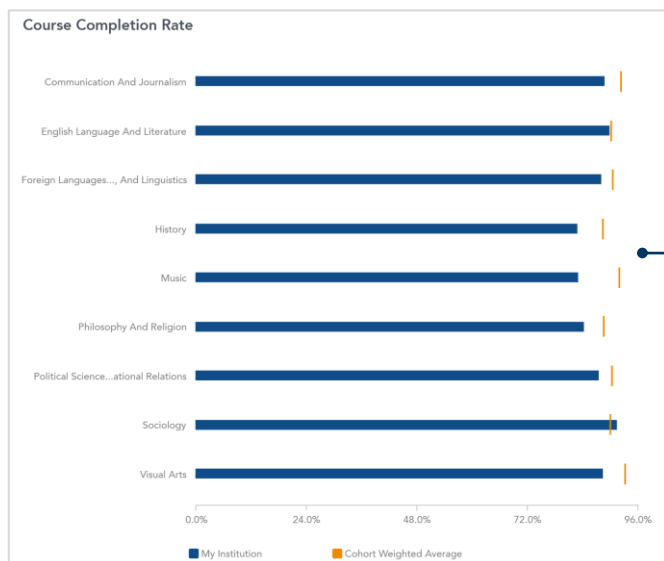
Potential Next Step
Support a Request for Additional Instructional Capacity

Department & College Analytics dashboard, navigate to the **Class Capacity Utilization tab**. Use the **Course-Level Capacity Information** report to view courses with fill rates of 95% or more. Sort the **Fill Rate [%] column** in descending order.

4 **View the *Course Completion Rate* Chart**

On the **Course Completion tab**, use the chart to identify the median completion rate of each benchmarked department to understand where your institution's rates are lower than the selected cohort.

For example, in the departments that fall below the benchmark, the college may be able to demonstrate a **need for additional central resources to support a larger student progress improvement initiative**.

Helpful Hints

- Use the **Course Division** and **Course Level filters** to refine your analysis to where you are most focused on student success efforts, like *Lower Division* coursework or *100-level* courses

- Focus on **Course Types** that likely require the most attention in relation to student success, such as *Discussion, Laboratory,* and *Lecture*

Potential Next Step
Support a Request for Additional Central Resources

In the **Department & College Analytics dashboard**, navigate to the **Course Completion tab**. Use the **Courses with the Highest Unearned Credit Hours** report to understand courses to prioritize course completion improvement efforts.

Source: Academic Performance Solutions.