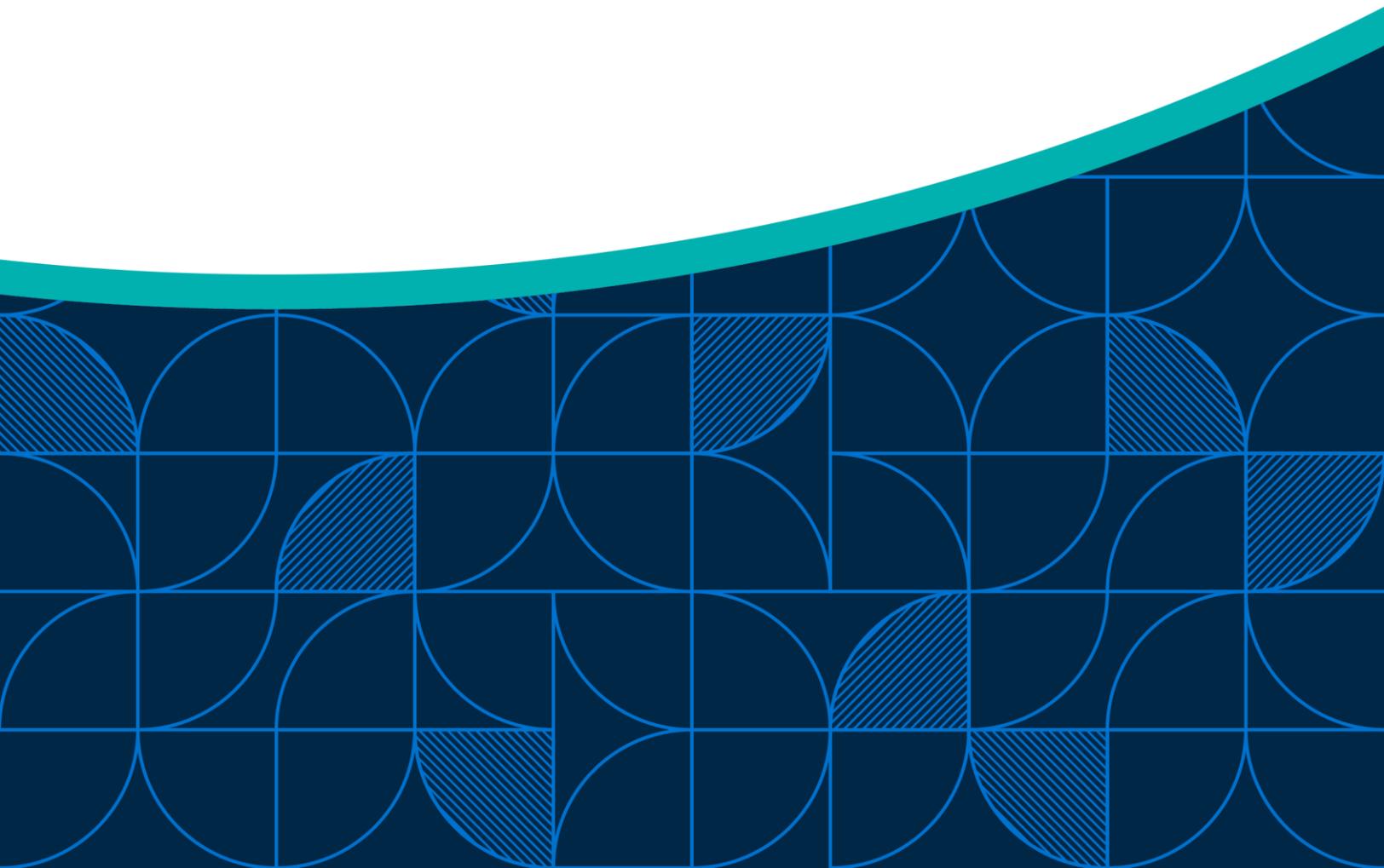


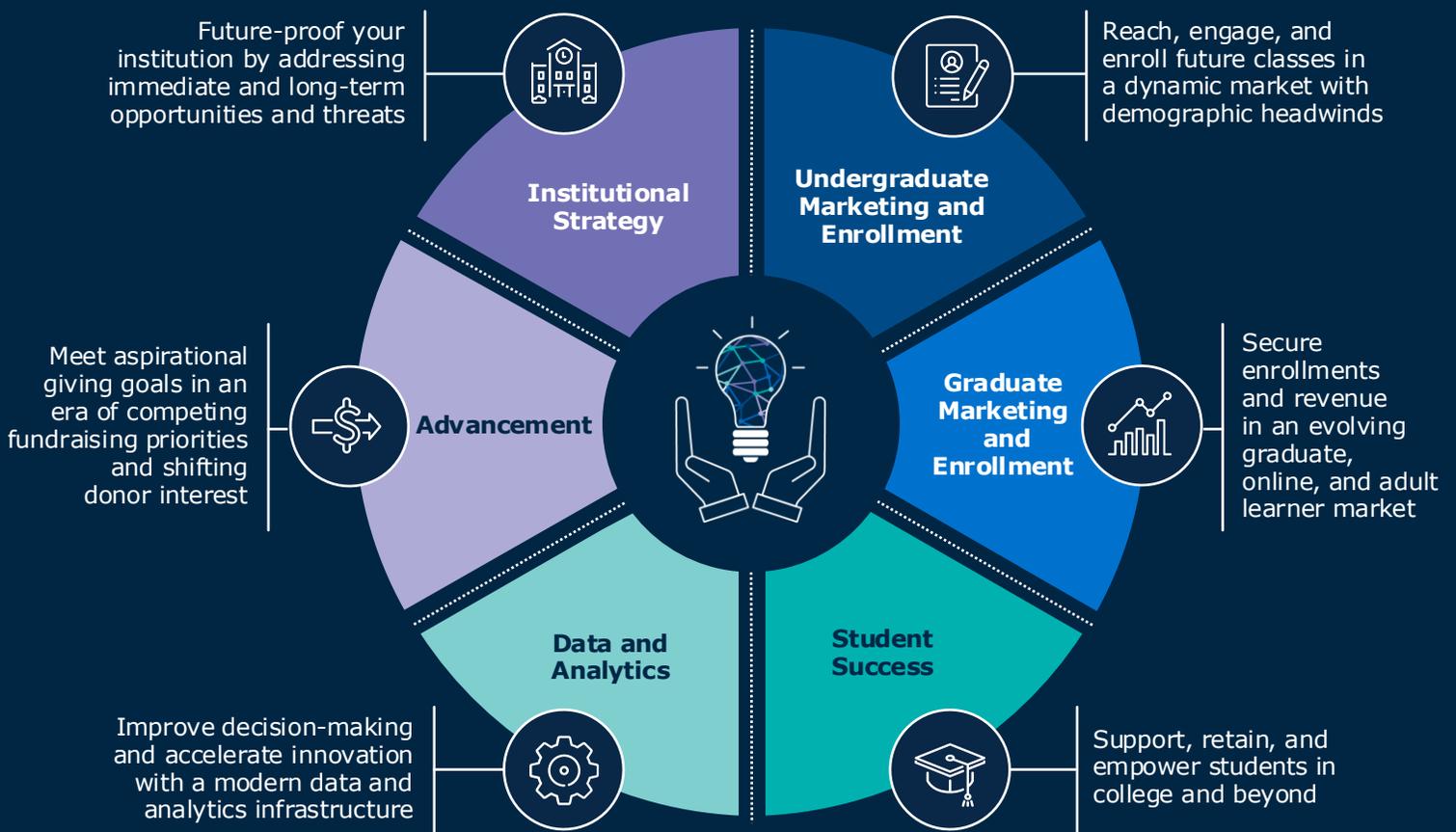


AUDIT

# Information Technology Organizational Chart Audit



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# Overview of Organizational Trends Across Higher Ed

## Information Technology at the Core of Institution-Wide Technology and Sector Shifts

IT has long been positioned as a utility in higher education, and their structures often reflected that role. Today, rising AI expectations, cost pressures, and cloud migration are catalyzing reevaluation and redesign of IT organizations to serve as **strategic and service-oriented campus partners**.

Still, while 43% of presidents rank digital transformation as a top priority, only **16%** of IT leaders say **IT staffing meets needs** and 42% of institutions expect **IT budget cuts** in 2025–26.

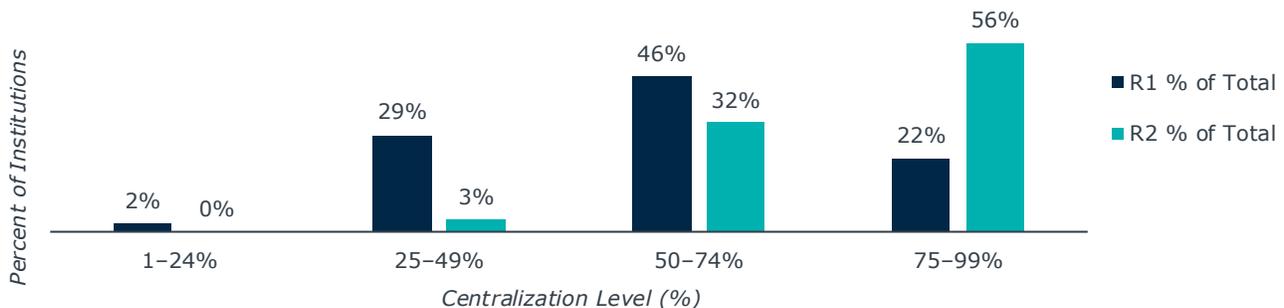
## Top Drivers of IT Organizational Change

- Demand for AI-Enablement**
  - Proliferation of AI tools requires CIOs to support experimentation, build literacy, and drive efficiency
  - Immature and shifting vendor landscape complicates campus adoption of AI tools
- Increasing IT Cost Pressures**
  - IT funding models still built for one-time projects and fail to address recurring cloud licensing costs
  - Vendors increasingly use AI to raise licensing costs through add-ons and usage charges
- Accelerating Cloud Migration**
  - 88% of institutions planned to migrate major applications to the cloud by 2025
  - Increasing emphasis on vendor and cloud management, system onboarding, and adoption

## Institutions Increasingly Centralizing IT, but Majority of R1s Rely on Decentralized IT Support

*EDUCAUSE, IT Centralization Levels at R1s and R2s; R1 n = 87; R2 n = 59*

These drivers are reshaping not only IT priorities but also how centralized IT functions are. Overly decentralized IT models hurt central IT's visibility into campus problems and its ability to coordinate scaled initiatives. As such, **two-thirds** of institutions in 2024 operate **at least 75% centralized**. Among research universities, centralization levels diverge sharply. 56% of R2s are 75–99% centralized, compared with just 22% of R1s.



## Emerging Trends Reshaping IT Organizations



Focus on Strengthening Security Function, But Staffing Shortages Persist



Renewed Emphasis on IT PM<sup>1</sup> and BA<sup>2</sup> Teams to Facilitate Campus Partnership



Short-term Repositioning is Solidifying Into Permanent AI Roles and Structures

1) Project management.  
2) Business analyst.

# Key Takeaways From Peer Analysis

## Executive Summary

### Introduction to the Information Technology Organizational Chart Analysis

This section provides an analysis of audit institution’s information technology services organizational chart, including a comparison with peer institutions. The assessment examines reporting structures, functional responsibilities, and alignment with emerging priorities across the higher education IT sector.

**Key Takeaways.** The following pages cover these takeaways in depth:



#### **Audit Institution’s Central IT Staff as Percentage of Total Employee FTEs is Less Than Peers**

Professional central IT staff FTEs account for 3.4% of Vanderbilt’s employee FTEs. Among peer institutions with available data, the median is 4.5%. According to [EDUCAUSE](#), institutions of a similar size (8,000-14,999 student FTEs) report a median of 4% of total employee FTEs in professional central IT roles.



#### **Audit Institution’s Central IT Staff FTE to Student FTE Ratio is Similar to Peers**

For every 1,000 student FTEs, audit institution employs 16.9 professional, central IT staff FTEs. Peers report a median of 21.4 professional central IT staff FTEs for every 1,000 student FTEs. According to [EDUCAUSE](#), institutions with 8,000-14,999 full-time equivalent students report a median of 8.4 professional central IT staff FTEs for every 1,000 student FTEs.



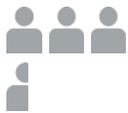
The remainder of this report provides feedback on the current and future structure of the IT organization for audit institution in comparison to peer institutions (see Appendix A for methodology).

# Takeaways from Peer Analysis

## Audit Institution's IT Staff as Percentage of Employees Behind Peers

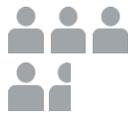
### Audit Institution's Central IT Staff as Percentage of Total Employee FTEs Less Than Peers

Professional central IT staff FTEs account for 3.4% of audit institution's employee FTEs. Among peer institutions with available data, the median is 4.5%. According to [EDUCAUSE](#), institutions of a similar size (8,000-14,999 student FTEs) report a median of 4% of total employee FTEs in professional central IT roles.



3.4

Audit Institution's IT Staff per 100 Employee FTEs



4.5

Peer Central IT Staff per 100 Employee FTEs

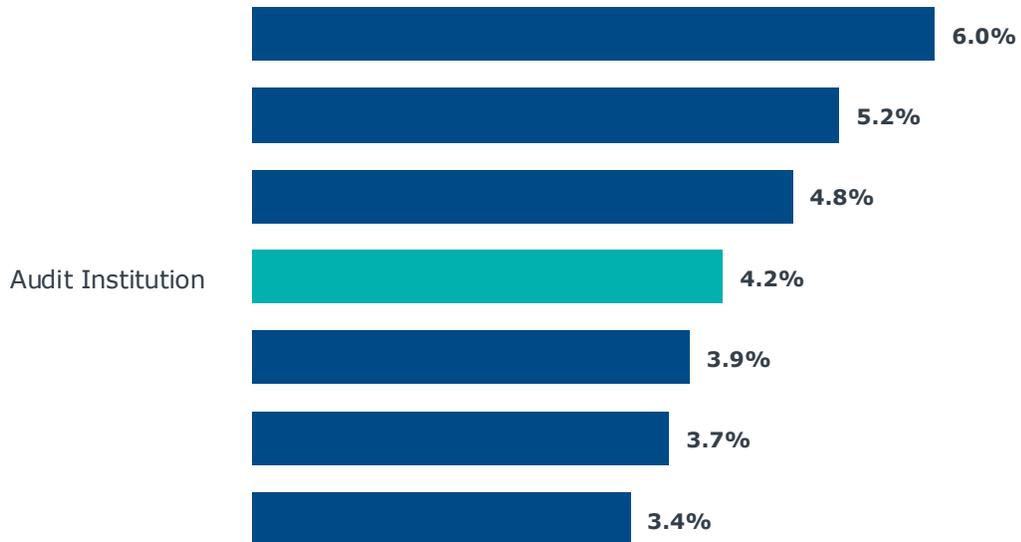


4

Carnegie Class Central IT Staff FTEs per 100 Employees<sup>1</sup>

### Peer Professional Central IT Staff Make up a Median of 4.5% of Total Employee FTEs

Percentage of Central IT Staff FTEs Among Total Institutional Employee FTEs



1) EDUCAUSE rounds percentages to the nearest whole number.

Source: "2025 CDS Interactive Almanac | IT Spending and Staffing" EDUCAUSE, September 8, 2025; EAB interviews and analysis.

# Takeaways from Peer Analysis

## Audit Institution's IT Staff to Student Ratio on Par with Peers

### Audit Institution's Central IT Staff FTE to Student FTE Ratio Similar to Peers

For every 1,000 student FTEs, audit institution employs 16.9 professional, central IT staff FTEs. Peers report a median of 21.4 professional central IT staff FTEs for every 1,000 student FTEs. According to [EDUCAUSE](#), institutions with 8,000-14,999 full-time equivalent students report a median of 8.4 professional central IT staff FTEs for every 1,000 student FTEs.

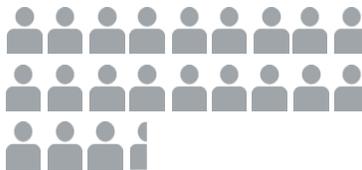
16.9

Audit Institution's IT Staff FTEs per 1,000 Student FTEs



21.4

Select Peer IT Staff FTEs per 1,000 Student FTEs



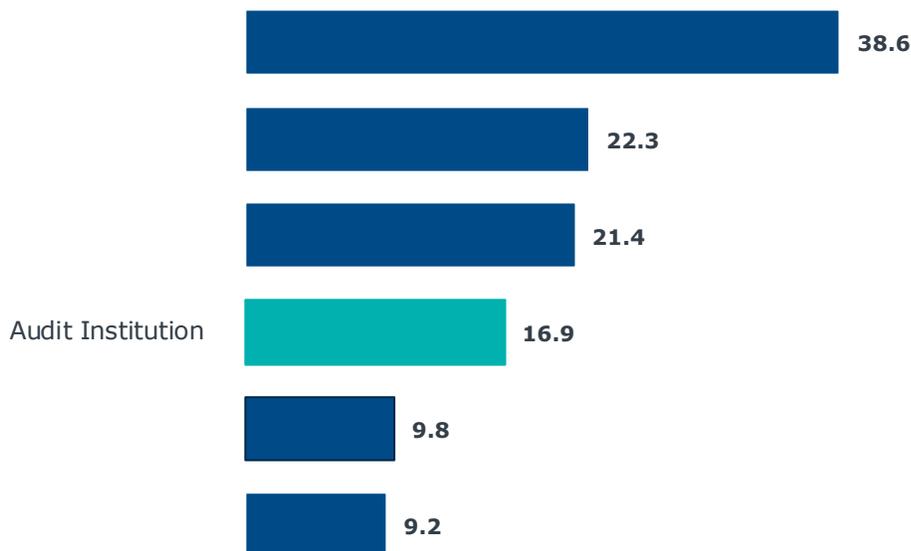
8.4

Carnegie Class IT Staff FTEs per 1,000 Student FTEs



### Peer Organizations Employ a Median of 21.9 IT Staff FTEs Per 1,000 Student FTEs

Number of Professional, Central IT Staff FTEs per 1,000 Student FTEs



### Across Higher Ed, Central IT Spend per Student Full-Time Equivalent Has Increased Slightly

[EDUCAUSE](#) reports that, for institutions with 8,000-14,999 full-time equivalent students, the median central IT spending per student FTE increased from \$1,000 to \$2,000 across the fiscal years 2022-2023 and 2023-2024. At institutions with 12,384 FTE students, this translates to a \$12,384,000 increase in central IT spending.

Although the latest data does not yet reflect substantial budget and staffing decreases seen across U.S. higher education in 2024-2025, institutions should consider how to maintain sustainable staff spending levels compared to peers despite escalating technology licensing fees. Please note that these analyses do not account for differences in distribution of central versus non-central total IT staffing across institutions.

1) EDUCAUSE rounds percentages to the nearest whole number.

Source: "2025 CDS Interactive Almanac | IT Spending and Staffing" EDUCAUSE, September 8, 2025; EAB interviews and analysis.