

Chemeketa’s Methodology for Selecting Peer Comparators

In order to select peer comparators, Chemeketa identified a list of characteristics important to the College, such as institutional control (public or private), type of degrees awarded, size, percentage of Hispanic/Latino enrollment, percentage of state funding, percentage of students receiving Pell grants, district size, and program offerings. We sought to develop three categories of peers: Similar peers from across the country, aspirational peers achieving notable results, and Oregon peers for colleges operating within our same state system.

Similar Peers

Once we determined the key characteristics of a peer comparator, we established specific criteria for each characteristic. We then used these criteria to narrow down the list of potential similar peers from the IPEDS database. The specific criteria used were as follows:

Characteristic	Criteria	Chemeketa
Institutional control	Public, 2-year	Public, 2-year (with a Bachelor’s degree)
Type of degrees awarded	Associate’s Colleges: High Transfer	Associate’s Colleges: High Transfer
Size	5,000-9,999	7,492
Hispanic/Latino enrollment	Percent of enrollment that is Hispanic/Latino is within +/- 15% of Chemeketa (and >= 15%)	29%
State funding	State appropriations as percent of core revenue is within +/- 10% of Chemeketa	18%
Pell grants	Percent of undergraduate students awarded Pell grants is within +/- 10% of Chemeketa	34%
District size	>= 800 square miles	2,600 square miles
Program offerings	Largest programs are similar – Transfer/General Studies, Healthcare/Medical, Business	Transfer/General Studies, Healthcare/Medical, Business

After applying these criteria, we identified five colleges that met all of the criteria:

- McLennan Community College (TX)
- Ocean County College (NJ)
- Orange County Community College (NY)

- Rowan College at Burlington County (NJ)
- Lane Community College (OR; technically an Oregon peer)

One of these colleges was in Oregon, while the remaining four institutions came from states outside of our accreditation region (NY, NJ, TX). We shared this list of peer comparators with College Council for input/feedback on additional characteristics or aspirational peer institutions that should be considered.

Aspirational Peers

Input and feedback from College Council was used to derive the methodology for selecting our aspirational peers. College Council feedback led to four additional criteria: recently invited to apply for the Aspen award, located in the Pacific Northwest, located outside the Pacific Northwest but close to Oregon, and Hispanic-serving institutions.

We balanced excellence with similarity to our institution by marrying College Council's recommendations with our similar peer selection criteria. We looked at recent Aspen award invitees and determined how many of the similarity criteria these institutions met.

College Council reviewed the list of institutions and the criteria that each institution met (or did not meet). Through this review, College Council identified three institutions that should be included as aspirational peers and the three criteria that were the most important for institutions to meet. These three institutions were combined with two additional institutions that either met all of the similarity criteria and College Council criteria (Los Medanos College) or that had been a recent Aspen award *finalist* and met all of the College Council criteria (Pierce College).

- Los Medanos College (CA)
- Pierce College (WA)
- Cuesta College (CA)
- South Puget Sound Community College (WA)
- Frederick Community College (MD)

Oregon Peers

In addition to the set of similar and aspirational peers described above, Chemeketa also selected a set of Oregon peers:

- Lane Community College
- Clackamas Community College
- Mount Hood Community College
- Linn-Benton Community College
- Portland Community College

These institutions were selected primarily because of their geographical proximity to Chemeketa and their historical use as tuition comparison institutions.