

## Classification Description

The Basic Classification is an update of the traditional classification framework developed by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education in 1970 to support its research program. The Basic Classification was published for use in 1973, and subsequently updated in 1976, 1987, 1994, 2000, and 2005. The 2005 edition involved some significant changes from the previous releases by dividing Associate's colleges into subcategories and using a multi-measure research index to classify doctorate-granting institutions. The 2010 update retains the same classification structure as the 2005 edition. Please see the Basic Classification Methodology for details regarding how this classification is calculated.

The Basic Classification Categories are as follows.

**Associate's Colleges.** Includes institutions where all degrees are at the associate's level, or where bachelor's degrees account for less than 10 percent of all undergraduate degrees. Excludes institutions eligible for classification as Tribal Colleges or Special Focus Institutions.

- Assoc/Pub-R-S: Associate's—Public Rural-serving Small
- Assoc/Pub-R-M: Associate's—Public Rural-serving Medium
- Assoc/Pub-R-L: Associate's—Public Rural-serving Large
- Assoc/Pub-S-SC: Associate's—Public Suburban-serving Single Campus
- Assoc/Pub-S-MC: Associate's—Public Suburban-serving Multicampus
- Assoc/Pub-U-SC: Associate's—Public Urban-serving Single Campus
- Assoc/Pub-U-MC: Associate's—Public Urban-serving Multicampus
- Assoc/Pub-Spec: Associate's—Public Special Use
- Assoc/PrivNFP: Associate's—Private Not-for-profit
- Assoc/PrivFP: Associate's—Private For-profit
- Assoc/Pub2in4: Associate's—Public 2-year Colleges under Universities
- Assoc/Pub4: Associate's—Public 4-year, Primarily Associate's
- Assoc/PrivNFP4: Associate's—Private Not-for-profit 4-year, Primarily Associate's
- Assoc/PrivFP4: Associate's—Private For-profit 4-year, Primarily Associate's

**Doctorate-granting Universities.** Includes institutions that awarded at least 20 research doctoral degrees during the update year (excluding doctoral-level degrees that qualify recipients for entry into professional practice, such as the JD, MD, PharmD, DPT, etc.). Excludes Special Focus Institutions and Tribal Colleges.

- RU/VH: Research Universities (very high research activity)
- RU/H: Research Universities (high research activity)
- DRU: Doctoral/Research Universities

**Master's Colleges and Universities.** Generally includes institutions that awarded at least 50 master's degrees and fewer than 20 doctoral degrees during the update year (with occasional exceptions – see Methodology). Excludes Special Focus Institutions and Tribal Colleges.

- Master's/L: Master's Colleges and Universities (larger programs)
- Master's/M: Master's Colleges and Universities (medium programs)
- Master's/S: Master's Colleges and Universities (smaller programs)

**Baccalaureate Colleges.** Includes institutions where baccalaureate degrees represent at least 10 percent of all undergraduate degrees and where fewer than 50 master's degrees or 20 doctoral degrees were awarded during the update year. (Some institutions above the master's degree threshold are also included; see Methodology.) Excludes Special Focus Institutions and Tribal Colleges.

- Bac/A&S: Baccalaureate Colleges—Arts & Sciences
- Bac/Diverse: Baccalaureate Colleges—Diverse Fields
- Bac/Assoc: Baccalaureate/Associate's Colleges

**Special Focus Institutions.** Institutions awarding baccalaureate or higher-level degrees where a high concentration of degrees (above 75%) is in a single field or set of related fields. Excludes Tribal Colleges.

- Spec/Faith: Theological seminaries, Bible colleges, and other faith-related institutions
- Spec/Medical: Medical schools and medical centers
- Spec/Health: Other health profession schools
- Spec/Engg: Schools of engineering
- Spec/Tech: Other technology-related schools
- Spec/Bus: Schools of business and management

- Spec/Arts: Schools of art, music, and design
- Spec/Law: Schools of law
- Spec/Other: Other special-focus institutions

**Tribal Colleges.** Colleges and universities that are members of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, as identified in IPEDS Institutional Characteristics.

- Tribal: Tribal Colleges

*Classifications are time-specific snapshots of institutional attributes and behavior based on data from 2008 and 2010. Institutions might be classified differently using a different time frame.*