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# Classification of Institutions of Higher Education

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The architecture of education system varies widely among nations. Knowledge production in higher education sector is increasing at a very fast pace resulting in increase in competition between universities and institutions with similar missions. This has stimulated development of multiple and complicated ranking systems too. This necessitates a framework to collect and report data on education programmes in order to harmonise and improve them and bring about international comparability. Besides, the system of classification is intended to benefit the stakeholders with a transparent approach to provide all the relevant information about the institutional characteristics. The appropriate classification of educational institutions also helps the education manager and policy makers to guide the higher education in the appropriate direction.

## Contemporary Classifications

### The Carnegie Classification

Initiatives to classify institutions of higher education started as early as 1970s. Historically, 'The Carnegie Classification' has been the leading framework for recognizing and describing institutional diversity in U.S. higher education for the past four and a half decades. Starting in 1970, the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education developed a classification of colleges and universities to support its program of research and policy analysis. Derived from empirical data on colleges and universities, the Carnegie Classification was originally published in 1973, and subsequently updated in 1976, 1987, 1994, 2000, 2005, 2010, and 2015 to reflect changes among colleges and universities. This framework has been widely used in the study of higher education, both as a way to represent and control for institutional differences, and also in the design of research studies to ensure adequate representation of sampled institutions, students, or faculty. The 2015 Classification update retains the same structure of six parallel classifications initially adopted in 2005. They are as follows: General description; Basic classification by level of education; Undergraduate instructional programme; Graduate Instructional Program; Enrolments and Undergraduate Profile (ratio of part and full time students, achievement characteristics/selectivity, transfer origin) and Size and Setting. The most recent addition to this classification is the category of community engagement which indeed is critical in order to measure the impact of education on society. These classifications provide different lenses through which to view U.S. colleges and universities, offering

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