



MAPS Data Dashboards Use Case

A Board of Regents Member of a 4-Year Regional Public University in the Midwest Looks to Improve Support for Increasingly Racially Diverse Students

MAPS
charting the shifting landscape
of the future of higher education

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How Well is Your College or University Performing Financially and Addressing Student Equity?

In the wake of student demographic changes and students' increasingly complex lives, higher education leaders will need to take a data-backed approach to decisions affecting students, especially historically marginalized students. The MAPS Project gives higher education leaders actionable insights and tools to navigate challenges, empowering them to create a more equitable future for historically marginalized students.

The **Financial Health Dashboard** offers a first-of-its-kind visibility into the financial health of more than 3,000 colleges and universities nationwide and the system as a whole. Leveraging sector-specific models, this interactive resource provides decision makers with a data-driven way to understand the current financial state, learn from peers, and together shape a system where every student can succeed.

The **Institutional Equity Outcomes (IEO) Dashboard** helps institutions of higher learning more easily understand their own college or university's data on enrollment, retention, and graduation. It aims to address the need for consistent, system-wide metrics to measure equity and implementation of solutions that can be applied to the specific needs of each school and its student population. Academic institutions can use the platform to see if the efforts they are making around equity and inclusion are working and how they should best utilize their resources.

Finally, the **Student Trends and Enrollment Projections (STEP) Dashboard** is an interactive data tool that visualizes historical enrollment and population trends, forecasts future trends until 2030, and provides insights into student migration flow and online-only education. Using IPEDS, College Scorecard, and US Census Data, the STEP Dashboard allows users to drill down to the state level and filter by institution type, student race, student gender, and more to understand potential areas of opportunity. These actionable insights can help inform recruitment efforts, strategic planning, resource allocation, and innovative investment opportunities.



Use Case: A Board of Regents Member of a 4-Year Regional Public University in the Midwest Looks to Improve Support for Increasingly Racially Diverse Students

This fictional example is based on real data from the MAPS dashboards about an actual institution that will remain anonymous.

THE CHALLENGE

James serves on the governing board of a Midwestern, 4-year regional public university that is located in a rural environment and that enrolls a majority of white students. The governing board members have been curious about how to better support historically marginalized students, but are having difficulty understanding how that should translate into specific programs or services, and how it should be funded. James also recognizes that the governing board could use a broader, data-led perspective to help them better serve students from all races, as the board members are all white.

KEY FINDINGS: STEP DASHBOARD

First, he starts with the STEP Dashboard. He is most interested in seeing trends affecting Missouri, since he knows it is his institution’s top recruitment state.

- **Student Demographic and Enrollment Trends**
 - The STEP Dashboard shows James that both the population and enrollment of white and Black adults between the ages of 18-24 is projected to decline in Missouri by the year 2030.
 - The opposite seems to be true for Hispanic students, Asian students, and students of two or more races, as they are projected to increase both in population and enrollment numbers.

Decreasing Race/ethnicity	Population		Enrollment	
	2021	2030	2021	2030
White	411,205	370,334	80,027	57,198
Black	73,379	70,204	10,269	4,079



	Increasing Population		Increasing Enrollment	
Race/ethnicity	2021	2030	2021	2030
Hispanic	35,648	38,069	5,610	7,560
Two or More Races	18,729	22,800	4,210	4,841
Asian	15,714	17,928	3,309	3,576

- **Student Migration:**

- James now sees how many Missouri resident students stayed in state and how many went out of state in 2021. This can help inform the university’s recruitment strategy, as it is clear that first-year students who are interested in pursuing public 4-year options tend to stay in Missouri to do so.
 - Missouri first-year students who chose a public 4-year institution
 - Stayed in state: 72.5%
 - Went out of state: 27.5%
 - James also sees what states are sending the most students to Missouri, which can inform outreach efforts. He can also explore demographic trends in these states, as he has done for Missouri, to inform the recruitment strategy and enrollment predictions.
 - Most inbound first-year students come to Missouri from:
 - Illinois
 - Kansas
 - Foreign countries
 - Texas
 - Iowa

- **Remote Distance Learning:**

- Next James looks at remote distance learning trends in Missouri. He can deduce that, while exclusively remote learning isn’t the most popular option for students in Missouri, interest in this learning modality has been steadily increasing over time, even before it shot up in 2020 due to the pandemic.
 - Exclusive remote enrollment
 - In 2012: 6.2%
 - In 2020: 21.3%
 - In 2021: 15.5%
 - Even after the peak of the pandemic, it appears that a considerable amount of students enrolled at Missouri’s public 4-year institutions are exclusively remote



learners. He notices that, in 2021, 3.8% of exclusively remote undergraduate students in these institutions were coming from out of state.

KEY FINDINGS: FINANCIAL HEALTH DASHBOARD

Now James moves to the Financial Health Dashboard. This dashboard uses IPEDS data from 2014-2021 to uniquely assess the financial standing of more than 3,000 institutions of higher education. The tool calculates institutional financial health by using a weighted formula and ranks within an institution's sector for comparability of funding models and resources. Percentile ranks are meant to provide insight into a school's financial standing, priorities, and opportunities.

- **Financial Health percentile:** James sees his university falls in the **53rd percentile of public, 4-year or above higher education institutions.**
- **Comparing peer institutions:** James compares his university to other 4-year public colleges and universities in his state and finds that his university falls at a higher percentile than his peer institutions and only ranks below one other.
- **Areas of strength:** He notices that compared to five peer institutions, his university has the highest net positive income and its retention rate is increasing at the highest rate among its peers.
 - Revenue per student change over time (second highest)
 - Retention rate over time (and second highest retention rate)
- **Areas for investment:** However, his university is spending the least amount of money on academic support, discounts on tuition, scholarships and fellowships. Also, while his university is spending in the middle of the pack for instruction expenses as a percentage of total expenses, it is also decreasing that spending over time more than any of his peer institutions. He realizes that the lack of financial support and academic support could impact which students can afford to attend the university and the experience they have once they get there.
 - Academic support as total percentage of expenses
 - Discounts and allowances applied to tuition per student
 - Scholarships and fellowships expenses as a percentage of total expenses
 - Instruction expenses as a percentage of total expenses change over time



KEY FINDINGS: INSTITUTIONAL EQUITY DASHBOARD

Finally, James looks at the MAPS Equity Indicators dashboard, which contextualizes racial and socioeconomic data.

- **University Overview (2021):**
 - Full-time Enrollment Undergrad/Grad: 4,405/985
 - Undergrad Pell Recipients: 30% are Pell recipients
 - Full-time Undergraduate Graduation Rate: 55%
 - Retention Rate: 76%
- **Majority Race of Instructors:** 85% White
- **Demographic Information:**
 - Race of Undergraduate Enrollment (2021) :
 - White: 85%
 - Hispanic: 4%
 - Black: 4%
 - Asian: 1%
 - Two or more races: 4%
 - Graduation Rates for Specific Groups Compared to the Institution's Overall Graduation Rate:
 - White: 57%
 - Hispanic: 49%
 - Black: 21%
 - Asian: 83%
 - Two or more races: 41%

He sees that his university was enrolling and graduating white students at well above the state and national levels. However, his institution's enrollment and completion rates were much lower than state and national levels for Black and Hispanic students. Troublingly, graduation rates for Hispanic and Black students lag behind their white counterparts.

INSIGHTS

First, the STEP Dashboard showed him the importance of targeted recruiting efforts in Missouri for Hispanic students, Asian students, and students of two or more races, as those groups are projected to increase over the next decade. If his institution chooses to focus on enrolling more Black students, they may want to consider appealing to learners over the age of 25 as well, since the population of 18-24 Black Missouri residents is projected to decline. James is mindful that recruiting these students will not be enough, but that the school also needs to invest in supporting through their graduation and a positive impact beyond. He also sees that there is an increasing interest in fully remote learning that his university can look to offer or expand.



Second, the Financial Health Dashboard showed him that his university is doing well financially compared with its peers and has strong net positive income. He also sees that his university ranked lowest in its peer group in academic support, tuition discounts, scholarships and fellowships, which could be leading to negative outcomes for students, especially those from historically marginalized racial groups.

Third, the Institutional Equity Outcomes Dashboard showed him how heavily his institution relies on white residents for undergraduate enrollment and for their faculty positions. He knows that the school will need to diversify its student body and its faculty if it wants to remain competitive and truly fulfill their institutional mission of providing a public good to all residents. He can also look at providing services to students like on-campus childcare and night classes to lower barriers for students outside the traditional 18-24 year old range, as many students are increasingly working and parenting adults.

James is now empowered to approach his board with a portfolio of data-backed ideas to validate and intensify his university's goal to serve all residents and students in Missouri more equitably.

SOLUTIONS

James explores [MAPS Resources](#) to find examples and information about how colleges and universities can better support students of diverse racial backgrounds through programs and student services. He also shares his findings with a peer learning group of other board members, which leads to new ideas as well.