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CLASSIFICATION IS ONE OF THE MOST CHALLENGING TASKS that human beings confront. Which books should be shelved together in a library? Which disciplines should be organized into the same school or colleges in a university? On what basis should students be grouped together in a school? Which institutions should be clustered together in the universe of higher education?

What you hold in your hands or see on your screen is the 2000 edition of the *Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education*, the first step of our two-stage plan to revamp the Classification. Following this foreword you will find:

- A list of categories and definitions;
- Technical notes;
- Summary information about the 2000 edition;
- A detailed introduction;
- A listing of institutions by Classification category; and
- An alphabetical index of institutions.

In this foreword my goal is to set a context for the 2000 Edition by providing a brief history of the Classification, by reflecting on what the Classification is and is not, and finally, by describing our long-term goals for the 2005 Classification.

The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education is the framework in which institutional diversity in United States higher education is commonly described. Developed in 1971 under the leadership of Clark Kerr by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, the Classification was designed to support research in higher education by identifying categories of colleges and universities that would be "homogeneous with respect to the functions of the institutions and characteristics of students and faculty members." Published in 1973, 1976, 1987, and 1994, the Classification groups American colleges and universities according to their missions as revealed in existing data on their behavior. Over the years, it has been a useful tool for researchers and institutional personnel interested in analyzing individual institutions, students and faculty, and the system of higher education as a whole.

The Classification has been widely used for unintended purposes as well, some benign and others not. *U.S. News & World Report* uses the Classification to organize its influential college rankings. Some governmental bodies consult the categories when making decisions about institutional funding. Some foundations target certain grant programs to institutions based on the Classification. Some higher education organizations use the Classification in determining membership dues. Campus officials regularly look to the Classification to gauge where their college fits into the academic pecking order, and to identify peer institutions for comparison purposes. Indeed, because many people perceive the Classification as a ranking system, some institutional leaders adopt "moving up the Carnegie Classification" as an explicit institutional goal.

This complicated situation leaves us at the Foundation with a challenging dilemma. How do we responsibly meet the needs of the research community that has used this tool for decades? How do we mitigate the effects of misinterpretation of the Classification as a ranking system? Most importantly, are there other ways to capture the institutional universe that would make the Classification a more flexible and informative tool, better reflecting the complexity of higher education? Shortly after assuming the presidency of the Foundation in 1997, I convened a group of scholars and experts in the field to consider and weigh these very issues.

We came up with an ambitious two-stage plan. We would publish an updated Classification in 2000 that uses current data and makes limited changes. By 2005 we intend to put in place a Classification system that will replace the present single scheme with a series of classifications that will recognize the many dimensions of institutional commonality and difference.

The 2000 Edition of the Classification represents the first stage of this plan. Our overriding concern in this edition is to update information that has become seriously outdated since 1994. Indeed, the 2000 Classification retains the basic structure of the earlier versions with just a few relatively small changes to definitions and categories. Issues of data comparability, dissatisfaction with certain criteria that have been used in the past, and discomfort with the influence of the Classification in shaping institutional priorities were the factors driving the few changes we made. It is not our intention to signal a new set of standards or targets with this edition, and we have no plans to issue any further editions prior to 2005.

One example of a change is the reduction of the number of categories used to group doctorate-granting institutions from four to two in this edition. We feel that the use of federal obligations (as based on data published by the National Science Foundation) as the *sole* measure of research activity in an institution is inadequate. While we believe that research is an extremely important element of institutional mission, we are also convinced that a nuanced set of measures is needed to reveal research activity more comprehensively. We have chosen to suspend measurement of this attribute until a satisfactory set of indicators has been developed, as well as indicators for other defining components of mission, including teaching and service.

The second stage of the plan, which is already underway, is to conduct the research necessary to implement a 2005 edition of the Classification that will provide a sophisticated, adaptive set of tools that allows users to cluster institutions in several different ways. Our goal in developing a multiple classification system is to provide a series of lenses through which to examine and analyze institutional mission and other important differences among institutions. Users of such a system will have to make deliberate choices about which dimensions are relevant for a given purpose. Our hope is that this system will reveal varied pictures of the institutional universe, capturing in a more authentic way the true complexity of the U.S. higher education system. Such a system should serve the needs of both the higher education research community and other users more faithfully than a single monolithic classification scheme.

One of the greatest strengths of the higher education system in the United States is its diversity of institutions. One pernicious effect of the Carnegie Classification from the perspective of the Foundation is the tendency for many institutions to emulate the model of a large research university. It is our hope that the multiple lenses of the 2005 classification system will encourage institutions to fulfill their distinct missions. Until then, we present this update of the classic Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.