

# Fact Book

## on Higher Education

U.S. Regions and 50 States in Perspective

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Copies of the *Fact Book on Higher Education* are available from the SREB publications office. SREB continuously monitors new comparative data and makes them available on the SREB website: [www.sreb.org](http://www.sreb.org). The website also features an online edition of the *Fact Book* with links to the latest updates of the tables and individual *Featured Facts* reports for each of the 16 SREB states.



## Message from the SREB President

Among the many documents that SREB produces, the *Fact Book on Higher Education* has been the most enduring. Since 1956, it has chronicled the history of progress in the South, as SREB states graduated more associate, bachelor's, master's and professional degree students year in and year out. In this, my first year at SREB, I have taken pride in claiming association with such SREB gems. The *Fact Book* represents the kind of work that keeps our region aware of the progress we are making — and our eyes focused on where we still need work.

The *Fact Book* has chronicled the history of progress in the South since 1956.

### I learned three features of the *Fact Book* are worth recalling from time to time.

First, **SREB has collected higher education data from its compact states for a long time.** Institutions and states in the region agreed these data are important enough to collect, tabulate, report and analyze annually. Each state's Data Exchange coordinator submits the same core data sets, including degrees conferred, persistence and progression rates, credit and contact hours, funding, tuition and tuition policy, time- and credits-to-degree, and e-learning. These data help researchers and policymakers study trends and answer key policy questions.

In addition, **SREB collects data from a variety of sources,** some of which are not curated elsewhere. We choose sources that provide the most reliable and valid data to inform us on demographic, economic and policy trends while situating SREB states in both a regional and national context. SREB staff look for providers that collect data every year to ensure we can track long-term trends with comparable data. Federal sources are valuable, including the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Center for Education Statistics. Non-government sources, including the National Science Foundation and the College and the National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs, are indispensable also.

Finally, all **regular users of the *Fact Book* realize it is more than a book.** It's a compilation of rich data tables — over 100 of them — displayed with engaging narrative and graphics. While printed biennially, it is available online, where it comes alive every day. There, we update tables to make new data available soon after it is released. Years of related data accompany each *Fact Book* table online, making even more information readily accessible. Lay users as well as institutional and legislative researchers can download what they need, match it with their own data and use the results to tell their own stories.

Since coming to SREB, I've been concerned about the readiness of young adults for the changes in the workplace that economists are now forecasting. How well prepared is the current generation of young workers and high schoolers for what's to come? When will automation begin to disrupt their lives and careers? By 2030? How nimble are today's education systems for re-thinking education for tomorrow's challenges? Here's some advice: keep the *Fact Book* close at hand. Bookmark it on your computer. It might help us forecast more accurately as we try to weather the stormy decade ahead. Knowing what's coming helps to strategize for better days. I plan to host a lot of discussion on this topic in the months and years ahead. We certainly hope SREB is the first place you call when you and your colleagues are ready to talk.

Stephen L. Pruitt, Ph.D.  
President



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## Acknowledgments

The data collected with the SREB-State Data Exchange survey continues to serve as the foundation for the *Fact Book*. The survey, which began in 1969, relies on the assistance of Data Exchange coordinators from all 16 SREB states to gather up-to-date comparative data on degrees and certificates awarded, student persistence and progression, time- and credits-to-degree, full-time-equivalent enrollment, distance education, dual enrollment, state funding, and tuition and mandatory fees. We appreciate the commitment of these coordinators to submitting timely and accurate data.

The *Fact Book* also includes a multitude of data compiled from many different sources, including federal agencies and professional organizations. These include the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine; the American Medical Association; the Association of Research Libraries; the Center for the Study of Education Policy at Illinois State University; *The Chronicle of Higher Education*; the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources; the Institute for College Access and Success; the National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs; the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems; the National Science Foundation; the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association; the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis; the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; the U.S. Census Bureau; the Washington Office of The College Board; and various offices of the U.S. Department of Education, especially the National Center for Education Statistics, the Office of Postsecondary Education and the Office of Student Financial Assistance.

Production of the *SREB Fact Book* involves a team of thoughtful, detail-oriented SREB staff. Vice President of Education Data, Policy Research, and Programs, Joan Lord, provided invaluable input on drafts and assistance with crafting the book's story. Editorial consultant Teresa Valentine contributed greatly to the accuracy, consistency, and readability of the book through her careful review of drafts. Senior Designer and Production Manager, Lety Jones, was responsible for the design and layout of the book. Research Associates Chris Fuga and Rebecca Purser and Policy Analysts Meagan Crowe and Samantha Durrance provided valuable assistance in the updating of tables and drafting of chapters.



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