

MUS Data Points: Wall Street Journal Article Response

A recent [Wall Street Journal article](#) makes a number of statements about administrative bloat in higher education and its direct relation to tuition increases. Below are a few of the primary assertions and data points from the article, accompanied with equivalent data and summary points for the MUS. All data provided below was obtained from either the US Department of Education or the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education and is publically accessible.

WSJ #1 – Growth of employees has outpaced growth in students...."Officials (at Univ of MN) didn't keep close tabs on their payroll as it swelled beyond 19,000 employees, one for every 3.5 students".

MUS Student to Employee Ratios, 1999 to 2011: [Data Link](#)

MUS Summary Points

- The ratio of the total number of students in the MUS to the total number of employees has remained unchanged since 1999.

WSJ #2 - Many newly hired employees are doing little teaching...University of MN hired over 1000 administrators in the past 10 years, administrators grew more than twice as fast as the teaching ranks and nearly twice as fast as the student body. Nationally, administrators in higher education increased 50% faster than instructors between 2001 and 2011, says the US Dept of Education.

MUS Student and Employee Growth Rates, 1999 to 2011: [Data Link](#)

MUS Summary Points, 1999 to 2011

- MUS student enrollment outpaced the growth of administrators (26% to 17%).
- Faculty hires (instruction/research) also outpaced the growth of administrators (34% to 17%).
- The total number of employees grew at the same rate as students (both 26%).

WSJ#3 - In Minnesota (and across the nation), tuition and fees for state residents have more than doubled in the past decade....MN's tuition is \$13,524, the average public 4-year tuition in the nation is \$8,655, the average private 4-year tuition is \$29,056.

Resident Undergraduate Tuition & Fees, 2003 to 2013: [Data Link](#)

MUS Summary Points

- Over the past 10 years (2003 – 2013) tuition and fees have grown at a slower pace in the Montana University System than any other state in the western region.
- While the average ten year tuition increase across the region has more than doubled, rates in the MUS have grown at less than half those rates.

This article has also raised additional questions about instructional and administrative expenditures and staffing ratios throughout the MUS. In response, OCHE staff prepared operating budget trend reports for each campus, detailing expenditures and staffing ratios.

Campus Operating Budget Trends, FY08 – FY13: [Data Link](#)

Operating Budget Dashboard Indicators

- [System Analysis](#)
- [Metrics & Dashboards](#)
- [Campus Responses](#)