

State Reporting Burdens

As public institutions, Michigan's state universities are accountable to citizens and policymakers. Transparency is important to demonstrate the universities' efficient and judicious use of tuition and tax dollars. Part of that transparency is accomplished through state reporting to the Michigan Legislature and the Executive Branch. However, reports do not write themselves. Every report takes time to produce, and that time is spent by university employees. As more reports are required by state government, more staff time and financial resources are diverted from the primary task of supporting the core activities of teaching and learning.

In many cases, the information being sought through mandated state reports is already publicly available. Public universities report massive annual datasets on financial, academic, enrollment, human resources, and other areas to the U.S. Department of Education and the Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget. Alignment between and with the two datasets reduces duplication of efforts, and eliminating competing reports and definitions also makes it easier for all stakeholders to examine public university activities.

Policy Actions:

- Reduce unfunded state reporting activities.
- Streamline state reporting requirements to eliminate wasteful duplication of efforts.