

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Fall 2023

Top Competing Schools for CAS

Which colleges and universities are the biggest competitors for Bethel's College of Arts and Sciences (CAS)? A good way to identify top competing schools is to determine where new freshmen enrolled who were admitted to Bethel but went elsewhere. For several years Bethel has participated in the Student Tracker service of the National Student Clearinghouse which is able to identify where over 90% of U.S. college students are enrolled. Some highlights for Bethel:

- Historically, Bethel's biggest competitor is also the closest to us – the University of Northwestern – St. Paul (formerly Northwestern College). In Fall 2023, 6.7% of freshmen candidates admitted at Bethel enrolled at Northwestern.
- The University of MN—Twin Cities slipped from Bethel University's largest competitor for the fourth year in a row into second place. 5.7% of freshman candidates admitted at Bethel ended up enrolling at the U of MN—Twin Cities.
- The University of St. Thomas (St. Paul) is consistently our third largest competitor. Compared to enrolling 4.3% of Bethel's admitted freshman in Fall 2022, 4.9% of Bethel's admitted freshman enrolled at St. Thomas in the Fall 2023.
- While Grand Canyon University fell from the top ten competitors that candidates admitted at Bethel enroll at, 1.3% (14 students) still enrolled at Grand Canyon instead of Bethel. This is a decrease from the 2.7% that enrolled at Grand Canyon Fall 2022.
- Between the onset of the recession in 2008 and 2019, the percentage of admitted Bethel freshmen going to other private schools has fallen. It has moderately increased between 2020 and 2023. The percentage attending public colleges and universities continued to rise through 2019 and then fell during the pandemic. It again began to increase in 2022 and declined again in 2023 (see following chart).
- The percentage of admitted freshmen who opted to not enroll in college right away has continued to rise since the onset of the recession through 2015. The rate has largely remained consistent since 2016. It is of interest to note no significant change in this metric for Fall 2020 given the hesitancy of some students to enroll during the pandemic. The percentage of students who were admitted to Bethel and did not enroll in any college in Fall 2022 decreased to the lowest percentage in the past decade. Fall 2023 saw a return to pre-pandemic rates.

See the following chart for more information about "lost" students over the past five years.



Fall of:	2019		2020		2021		2022		2023	
Schools enrolling 15 or more new freshmen who were admitted at Bethel	UM-TC (99)		UM-TC (72)		UM-TC (93)		UM-TC (77)		UNW-SP (71)	
	UNW-SP (62)		UNW-SP (71)		UNW-SP (65)		UNW-SP (60)		UM-TC (61)	
	St. Thomas (55)		St. Thomas (55)		St. Thomas (33)		St. Thomas (44)		St. Thomas (52)	
	Dordt (28)		Grand Canyon-Trad (29)		Grand Canyon-Trad (25)		Grand Canyon-Trad (28)		Augsburg (24)	
	Winona State (24)		St. Catherine (20)		Gustavus Adolphus (22)		Gustavus Adolphus (22)		Gustavus Adolphus (23)	
	Augsburg (23)		UM-Duluth (20)		Hamline (21)		UMD (21)		Hamline (20)	
Wheaton (23)		Anoka Ramsey CC (18)		Augsburg (20)		Augsburg (20)		UMD (19)		
UW-RF (21)		Mankato St (17)		Wheaton (19)		Liberty (18)		Mankato St. (18)		
		UW-Eau Claire (15)		St.Benedict (17)		Mankato St (17)		Concordia & Wheaton (17)		
		Wheaton (15)		NDSU, St. Olaf & UMD (16)		St. Scholastica (16)		Concordia St. Paul (16)		
				Anoka Ramsey CC & St. Catherine (15)		St. Catherine (15)		St. Benedict (15)		
Minnesota	Number	% of Tot	Number	% of Tot	Number	% of Tot	Number	% of Tot	Number	% of Tot
4-year Private	301	25.3%	282	27.0%	273	24.1%	264	25.8%	312	29.5%
2-year Private	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
All MN Private	301	25.3%	282	27.0%	273	24.1%	264	25.8%	312	29.5%
4-year Public	170	14.3%	138	13.2%	145	12.8%	139	13.6%	119	11.2%
2-year Public	70	5.9%	77	7.4%	63	5.6%	45	4.4%	45	4.2%
All MN Public	240	20.2%	215	20.6%	208	18.4%	184	18.0%	164	15.5%
Other States										
4-year Private	287	24.1%	249	23.8%	298	26.3%	274	26.8%	244	23.0%
2-year Private	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%
All Other Private	287	24.1%	249	23.8%	298	26.3%	274	26.8%	245	23.1%
4-year Public	175	14.7%	131	12.5%	140	12.4%	158	15.5%	161	15.2%
2-year Public	18	1.5%	15	1.4%	19	1.7%	18	1.8%	19	1.8%
All Other Public	193	16.2%	146	14.0%	159	14.1%	176	17.2%	180	17.0%
<i>Unknown</i>	168	14.1%	153	14.6%	193	17.1%	124	12.1%	158	14.9%
Total	1189		1045		1131		1022		1059	
ALL PRIVATE	588	49.5%	531	50.8%	571	50.5%	538	52.6%	557	52.6%
ALL PUBLIC	433	36.4%	361	34.5%	367	32.4%	360	35.2%	344	32.5%
ALL 4-YEAR	933	78.5%	800	76.6%	856	75.7%	835	81.7%	836	78.9%
ALL 2-YEAR	88	7.4%	92	8.8%	82	7.3%	63	6.2%	65	6.1%
Source: National Clearinghouse, "Student Tracker"										

