

## Staffing in Professional, Continuing, and Online Education Units

### Overview

UPCEA regularly surveys its professional, continuing and online (PCO) education members and over time, the most recent membership survey shows that most staff sizes have decreased since the last survey was conducted three years ago. Staffing size has increased for larger institutions but decreased for the other segments.

Marketing departments are the most common departments within units for all segments except large institutions. The most prevalent department within large institutions is instructional design. Call center departments are the most added department from three years ago for all segments except medium institutions, which were most likely to have added a proctoring department. There was not a clear pattern of departments that were being cut.

Instructional design departments have the largest average number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff for all segments except medium-sized institutions for which marketing is the largest department. Instructional design remains the largest average department size from the previous survey, despite the average number of FTE decreasing in all segments but large and private institutions. Instructional design saw the largest percentage decrease in medium institutions.

### Methodology

- UPCEA conducted a membership survey between February and May 2018.
- The survey requested information about the salary, staffing and structure for higher education units.
- The survey was sent to 370 institutional members and 175 responded.

### Key Findings

Figure 1 shows the average and median number of FTE employees by institution size and type. Small institution units report gross revenue of  $\leq$  \$5 million, medium institutions between \$5 and \$15 million, and large institutions  $>$  \$15 million.

PCO units of small institutions have the fewest FTE staff with 14.9 on average while large institutions have the largest number with 107.1 on average. Public institutions have slightly more FTE staff 53.3 on average, while private institutions have 45.4.

**Figure 1: Average and Median Full-Time Equivalent Staff (2018)**

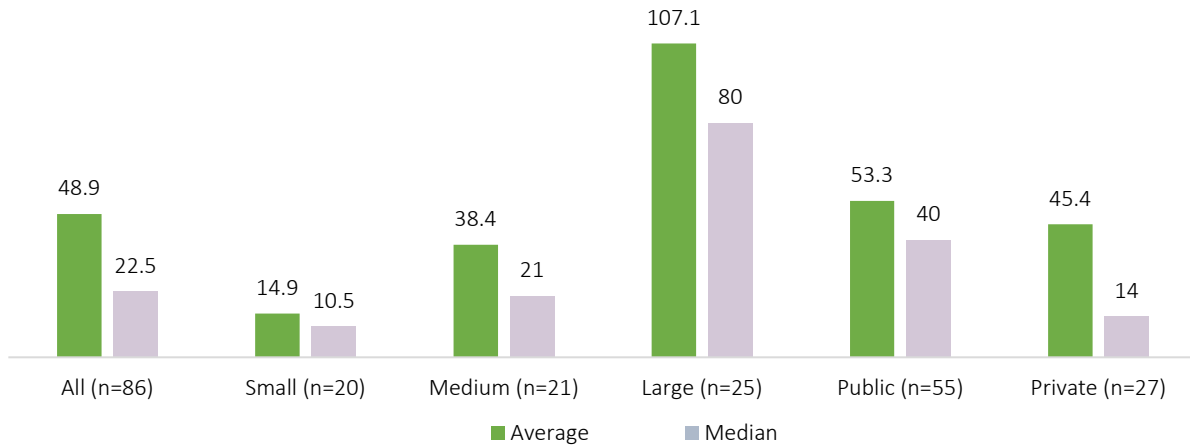
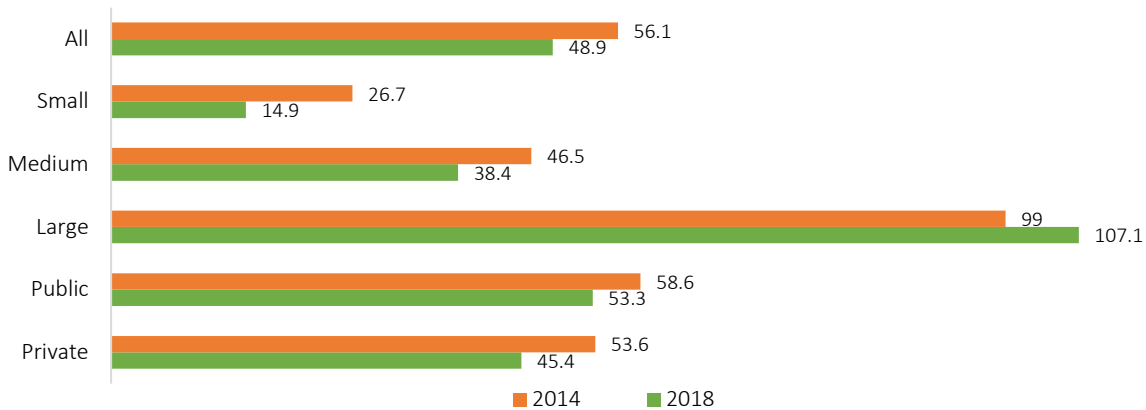


Figure 2 shows a comparison of average FTE staff sizes between 2014 and 2018. Overall, average PCO unit staffing sizes have decreased by 13%. Only large institutions saw staff sizes increase (8%). Small and medium institutions saw decreases of 44% and 17% respectively, while private institutions had a 15% decrease and public institutions saw a decrease of 9%.

**Figure 2: Average FTE Staff Sizes (2014-2018)**



Tables 1 and 2 show the average, median, 25<sup>th</sup> percentile, 75<sup>th</sup> percentile and 90<sup>th</sup> percentile breakdown for the FTE staff sizes in 2018 and 2014 respectively. The median FTE size has gone down overall (from 40 in 2014 compared to 22.5 in 2018). The only areas that saw increases in median FTE size were private institutions (23.3 in 2014 compared to 24.5 in 2018) and large institutions (72 in 2014 compared to 80 in 2018).

**Table 1: FTE Sizes by Year (2018)**

	Average	Median	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	90 <sup>th</sup> Percentile
All (n=86)	48.9	22.5	9.8	60.5	123.7
Small (n=19)	15.1	10	7	18	40
Medium (n=21)	38.4	21	14.5	48.5	116.8
Large (n=25)	107.1	80	50	125.5	268
Public (n=47)	56	40	15	80	131.2
Private (n=18)	63	24.5	9.5	72.5	295.5

**Table 2: FTE Sizes by Year (2014)**

	Average	Median	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	90 <sup>th</sup> Percentile
All (n=75)	56.1	40	16	63	145.2
Small (n=30)	26.7	17	5	24.5	55.9
Medium (n=20)	46.5	41	26.25	53.75	97.1
Large (n=25)	99	72	44	139.5	261.6
Public (n=47)	58.6	43	19.25	72	143.6
Private (n=27)	53.6	23.3	12	63	164

Figure 3 shows the percentage of institutions that have employees in each department. The marketing department is the most prevalent department overall (with 85% of respondents reporting at least one employee) and also the most common in small (79%), medium (85%) and large (100%) institutions as well as public (87%) institutions. Private institutions reported instructional design departments as the most prevalent department at 92%.

**Figure 3: Department Breakdown by Segment (%)**

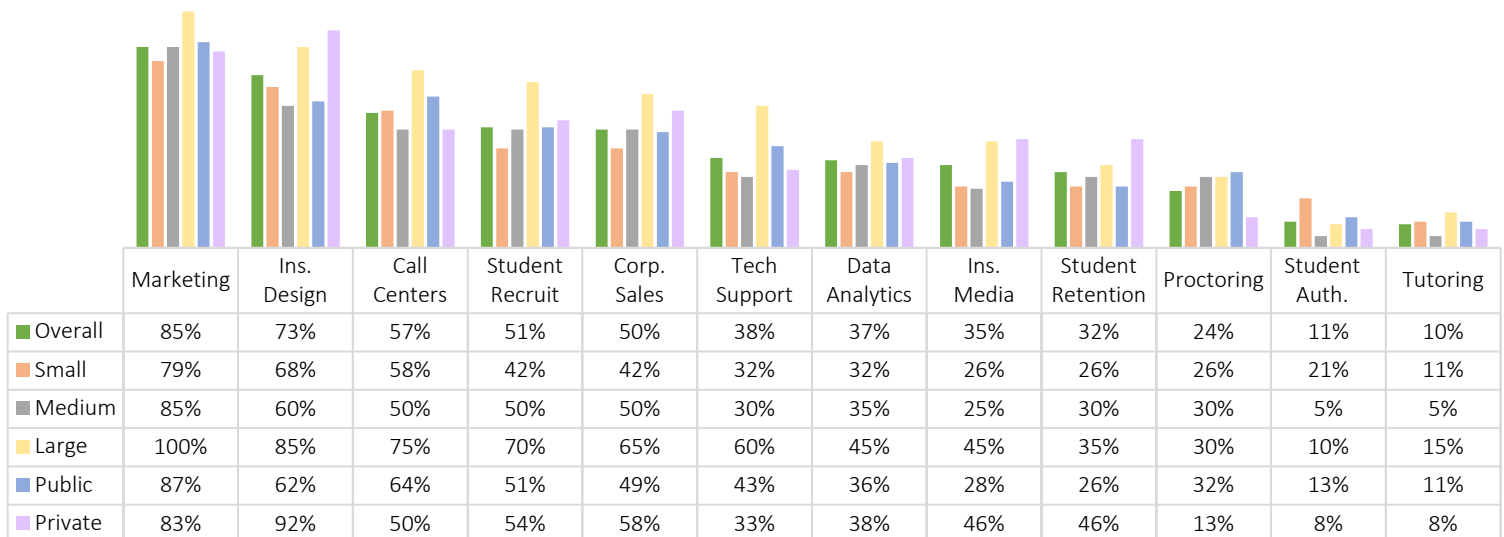


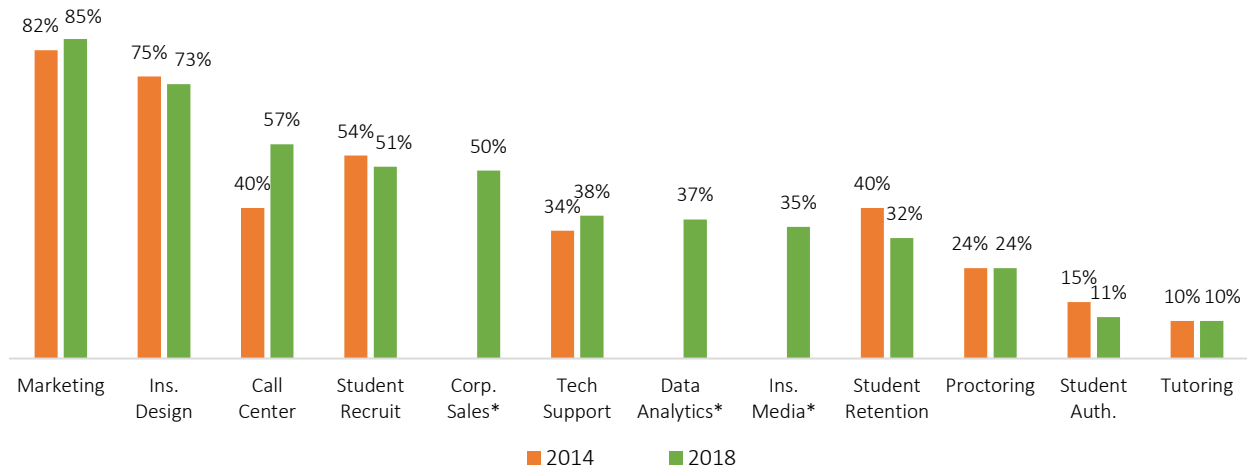
Table 3 shows the average department size broken down by segment. The instructional design department is the largest department overall with an average of 4.6 FTE staff, small institutions having an average of 3.2 FTE staff, large institutions 9.5 FTE, public institutions 3.9 FTE and private institutions 6.3 FTE staff. For medium institutions, marketing departments are the largest with an average of 3.1 FTE staff. Student authentication was, on average, the smallest department for all segments except small and private institutions. The smallest department in small and medium institutions is tutoring while proctoring is the smallest department in private institutions.

**Table 3: Average Number of FTE Staff by Segment**

	Overall	Small	Medium	Large	Public	Private
Instructional Design	4.6	3.2	2.4	9.5	3.9	6.3
Marketing	3.4	1	3.1	6.9	3.5	3.5
Student Recruitment	2.5	1.3	2.1	4	1.2	3.7
Call Centers	2	0.9	1.5	4.3	1.6	3.1
Student Retention	1.7	0.8	1.2	2.5	2	2.8
Corporate Sales	1.2	1.1	1	1.9	1.2	1.3
Instructional Media	1	0.5	0.3	1.5	0.7	1.4
Technical Support	0.8	0.5	0.8	1.4	0.8	1
Data Analytics	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.7	0.5	0.6
Proctoring	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.1
Tutoring	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.9	0.4	0.2
Student Authentication	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.3

Figure 4 shows a comparison between the percentage of institutions reporting at least one employee in each department from 2014 to 2018. The largest increase was in call centers with 40% reporting a call center department in 2014 and 57% in 2018. The largest decrease was in student retention which fell from 40% in 2014 to 32% in 2018.

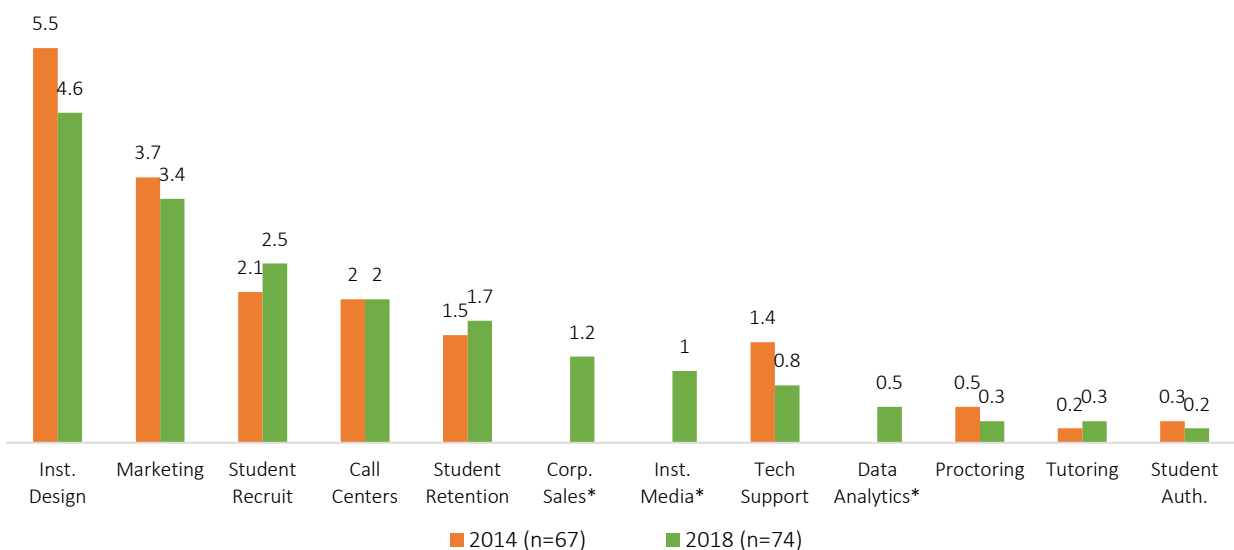
**Figure 4: Department Breakdown, Overall (2014-2018)**



*\*Only 2018 data available*

Figure 5 shows a comparison between 2014 and 2018 FTE staff sizes by department. Tutoring went up by the largest percentage (50%) followed by student recruitment (19%) and student retention (13%). All the other departments went down or did not change. The largest percentage decrease was in tech support which decreased by 43% followed by proctoring (-40%) and student authentication (-33%).

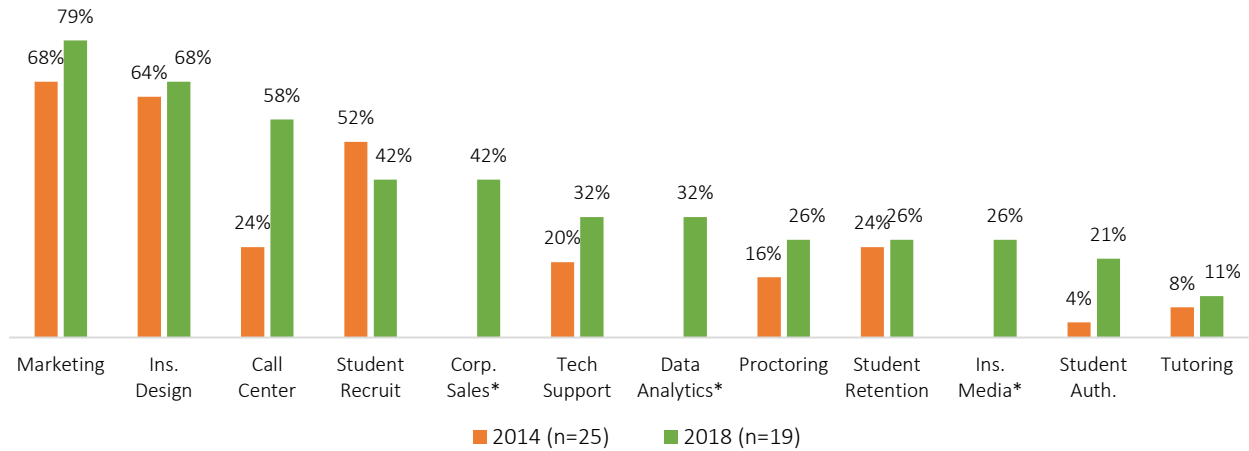
**Figure 5: Average FTE per Department, Overall (2014-2018)**



*\*Only 2018 data available*

Figure 6 shows percentage of small institutions that reported at least one employee in the department. The largest increase was in call centers which saw an increase from 24% of small institutions reporting a call center department in 2014 to 58% in 2018. The largest decrease was in student recruitment which saw a decrease from 52% in 2014 to 42% in 2018.

**Figure 6: Department Breakdown, Small Institutions (2014-2018)**



*\*Only 2018 data available*

Figure 7 shows the average FTE staff sizes per department for small institutions only. Instructional design has the largest department size with 3.2 FTE staff on average. Student recruitment is second with 1.3 FTE staff and corporate sales third with 1.1 FTE staff. The smallest departments are proctoring (0.2 FTE staff), student authentication (0.2 FTE staff) and tutoring (0.1 FTE staff).

**Figure 7: Average FTE per Department, Small Institutions (n=19)**

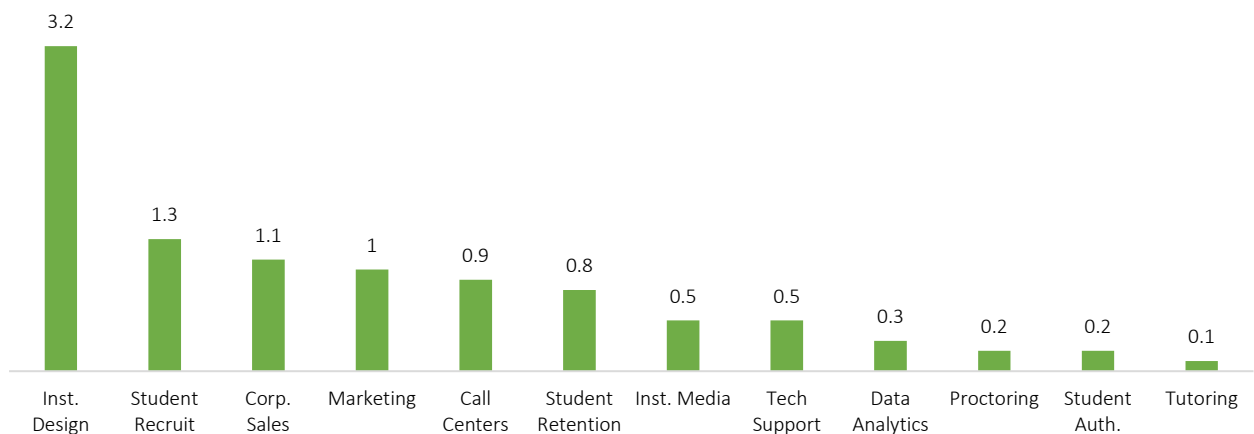
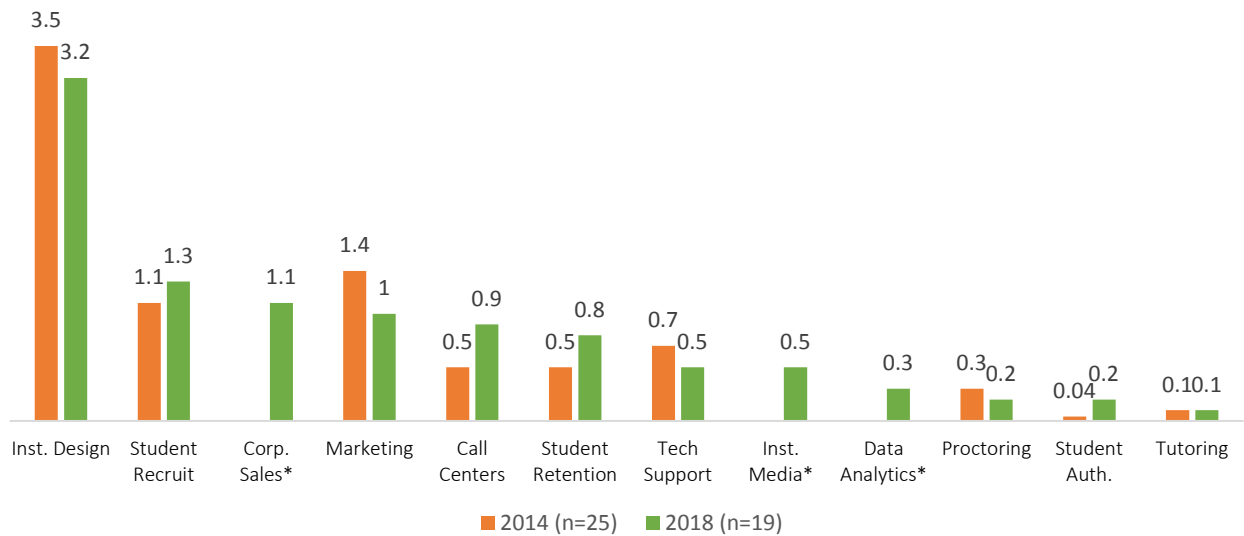


Figure 8 shows the average department size of small institutions for 2014 and 2018. Student authentication had the largest percentage change from 2014 to 2018 (400% increase), followed by call centers (80% increase) and student retention (60% increase). The largest decreases are in proctoring departments (33% decrease), followed by tech support and marketing (29% decrease each).

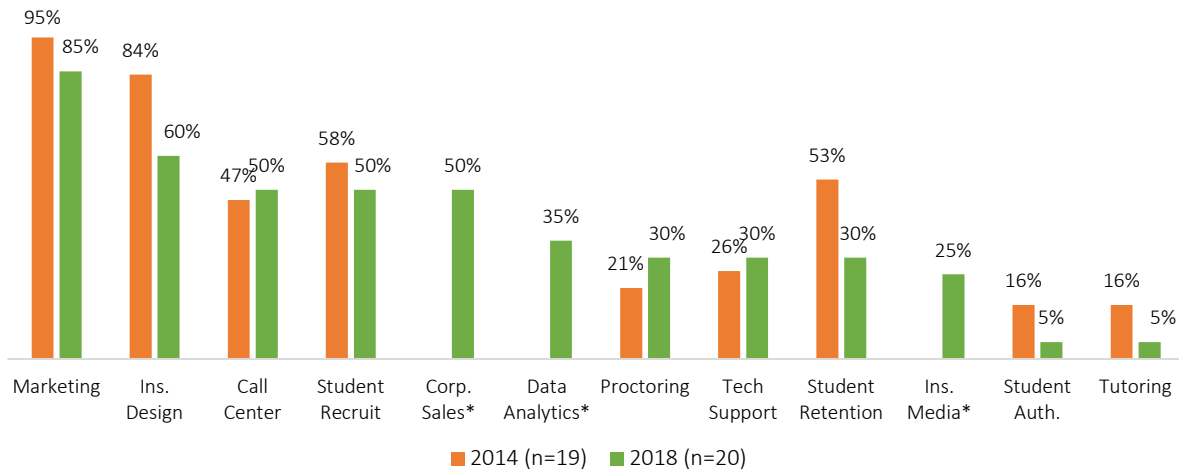
**Figure 8: Average FTE per Department, Small Institutions (2014-2018)**



*\*Only 2018 data available*

Figure 9 shows percentage of medium institutions that reported at least one employee in the department. Proctoring departments had the largest increase with 21% of medium institutions reporting a proctoring department in 2014 and 30% in 2018. Instructional design had the largest decrease with 84% of medium institutions reporting an instructional design department in 2014 and 60% in 2018.

**Figure 9: Department Breakdown, Medium Institutions (2014-2018)**



*\*Only 2018 data available*

Figure 10 shows the department breakdown of medium-sized institutions. The largest department in medium institutions is marketing with an average of 3.1 FTE staff. Instructional design departments are second with an average of 2.4 FTE staff, followed by student recruitment with an average of 2.1 FTE staff. Instructional media, tutoring, and student authentication are the bottom three with average FTE staff sizes of 0.3, 0.1 and 0.1 respectively.

**Figure 10: Average FTE per Department, Medium Institutions (2018)**  
(n=20)

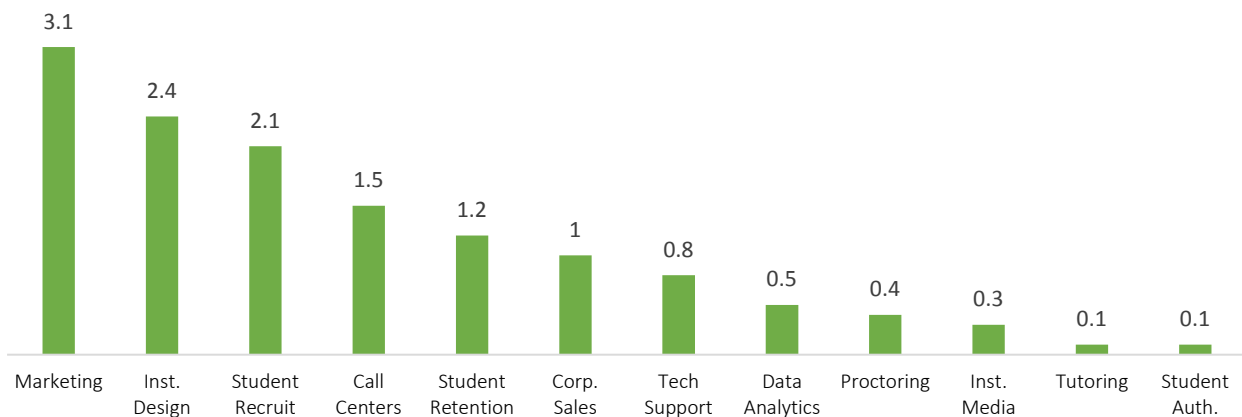
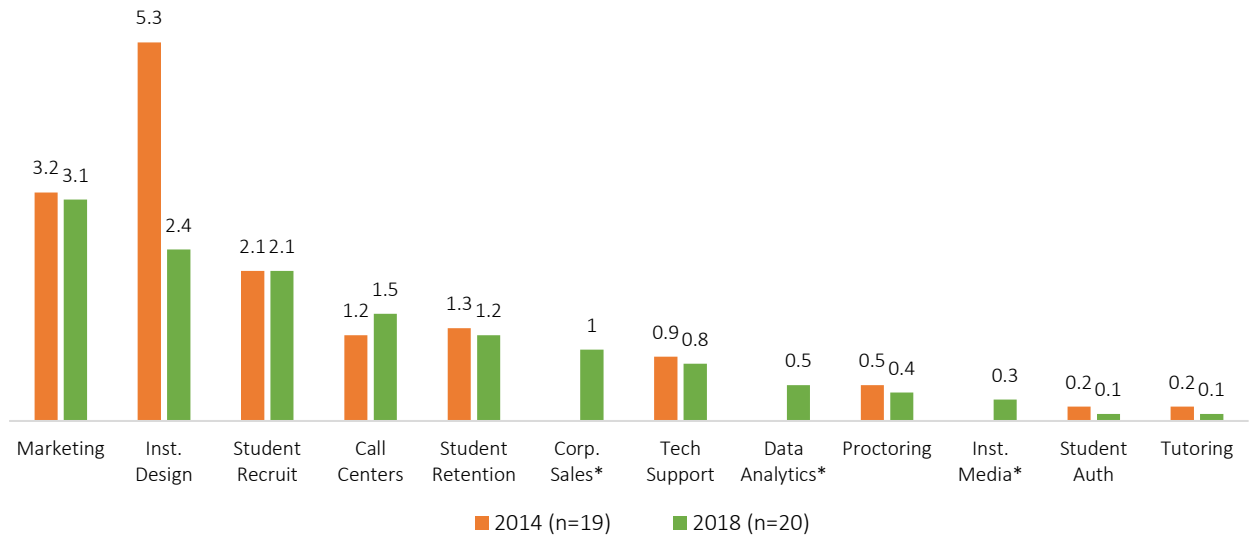




Figure 11 shows the average department size of medium institutions between 2014 and 2018. Only incoming call centers saw an increase from 2014 to 2018 (25%). Instructional design had the largest decrease (-54%), followed by student authentication and tutoring with -50% each.

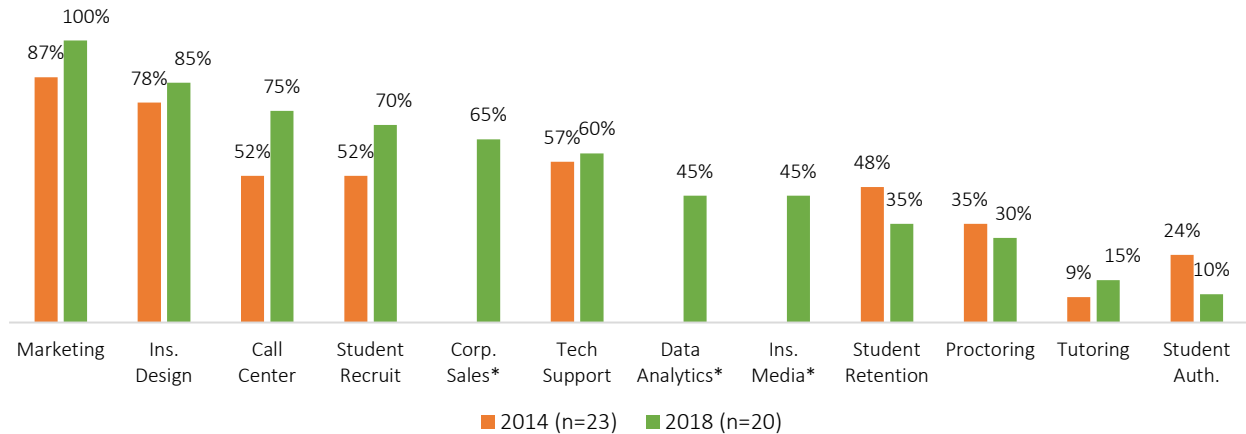
**Figure 11: Average FTE per Department, Medium Institutions (2014-2018)**



*\*Only 2018 data available*

Figure 12 shows the percentage of large institutions that reported at least one employee in the department. Call centers had the largest increase with 52% of large institutions reporting a call center department in 2014 to 75% in 2018. The largest decrease was in marketing departments with 87% reporting a marketing department in 2014 but falling to 31% in 2018.

**Figure 12: Department Breakdown, Large Institutions (2014-2018)**



*\*Only 2018 data available*

Figure 13 shows the department breakdown of large-sized institutions. The biggest department on average is the instructional design department with 9.5 FTE staff, followed by marketing with 7 FTE staff and call centers with 4.3 FTE staff. The smallest departments are data analytics (0.7 FTE staff), proctoring (0.6 FTE staff) and student authentication (0.3 FTE staff).

**Figure 13: Average FTE per Department, Large Institutions (2018)**  
(n=20)

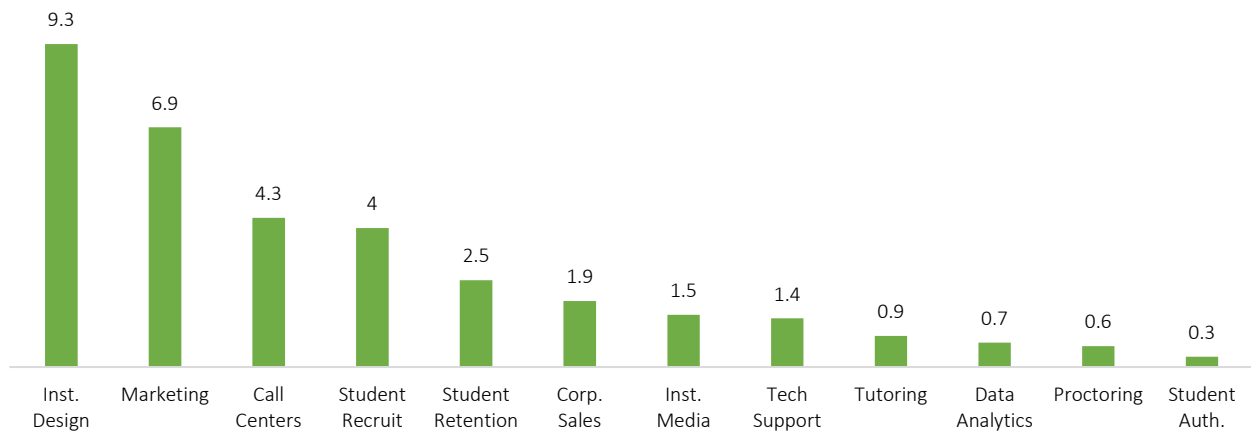
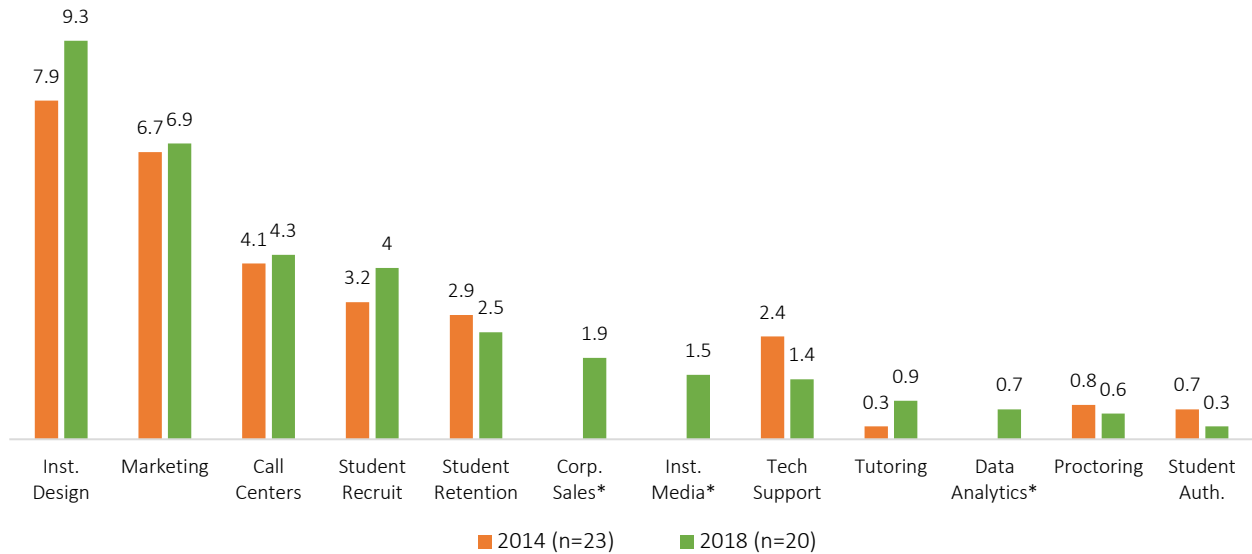


Figure 14 shows the average department size of medium institutions between 2014 and 2018. Student authentication (-57%), tech support (-42%) and proctoring (-25%) departments were the only three departments that saw decreases from 2014 to 2018. The remaining increased with the largest percentage changes in tutoring (200%), followed by student recruitment (25%) and instructional design (18%).

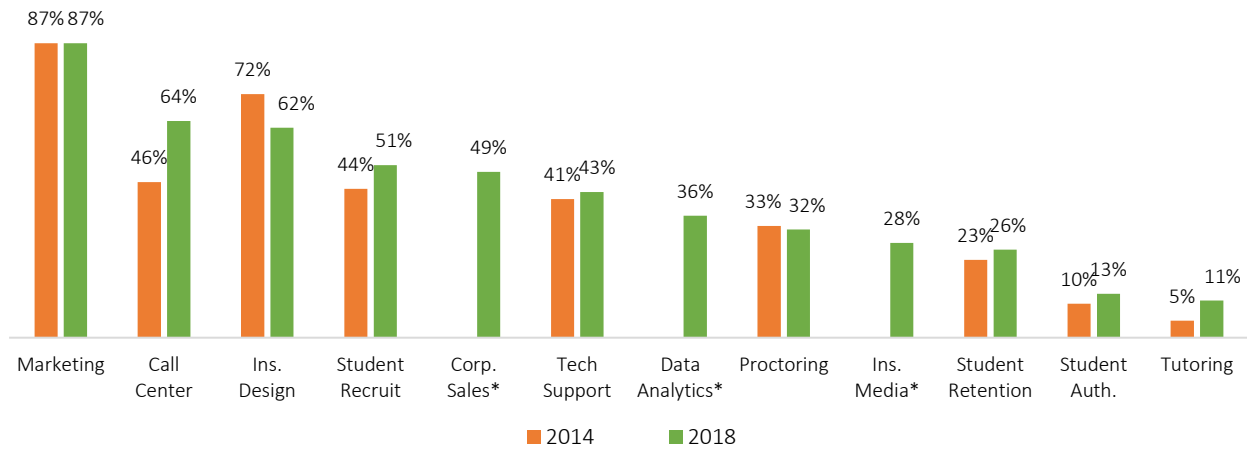
**Figure 14: Average FTE per Department, Large Institutions (2014-2018)**



*\*Only 2018 data available*

Figure 15 shows the percentage of public institutions that reported at least one employee in the department. Call centers had the largest increase with 46% of public institutions reporting a call center department in 2014 which increased to 64% in 2018. The largest decrease was in instructional design with 72% reporting an instructional design department in 2014 but only 62% in 2018.

**Figure 15: Department Breakdown, Public Institutions (2014-2018)**



*\*Only 2018 data available*

Figure 16 shows the average department size of public institutions. The largest department is the instructional design department with 4 FTE staff followed by marketing departments with 3.4 FTE staff, and student recruitment with an average of 1.8 FTE staff. The smallest departments are data analytics (0.5 FTE staff), proctoring (0.5 FTE staff), tutoring (0.4 FTE staff) and student authentication (0.1 FTE).

**Figure 16: FTE per Department, Public Institutions (2018)**  
(n=47)

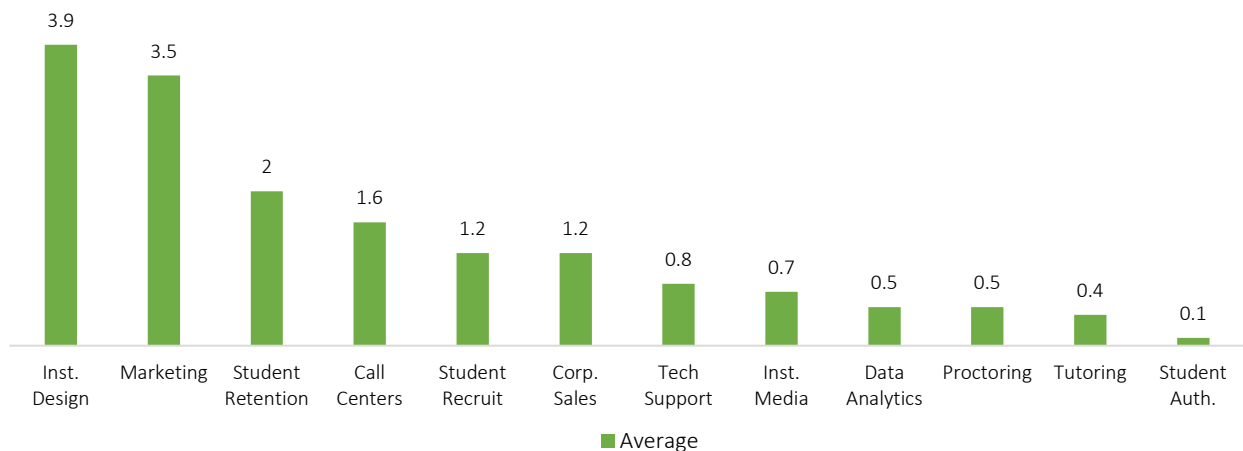
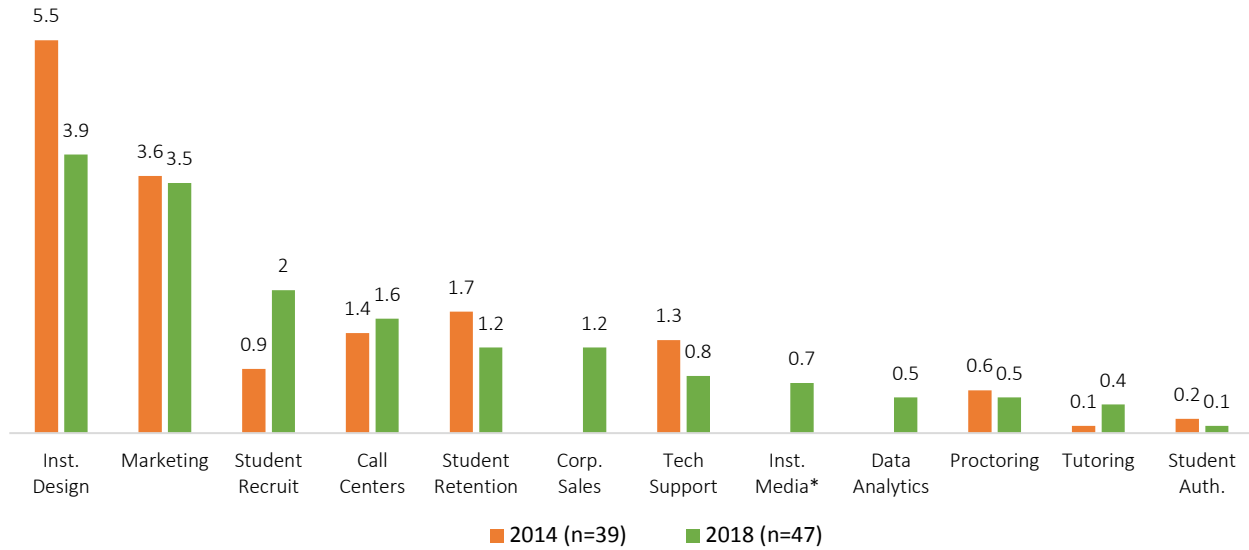


Figure 17 compares the 2014 to 2018 department sizes for public institutions. The largest increase was in tutoring (300%) followed by student recruitment (122%) and call centers (14%). The largest decrease was in student authentication (-50%), followed by tech support (-39%), instructional design (-29%) and student retention (-29%).

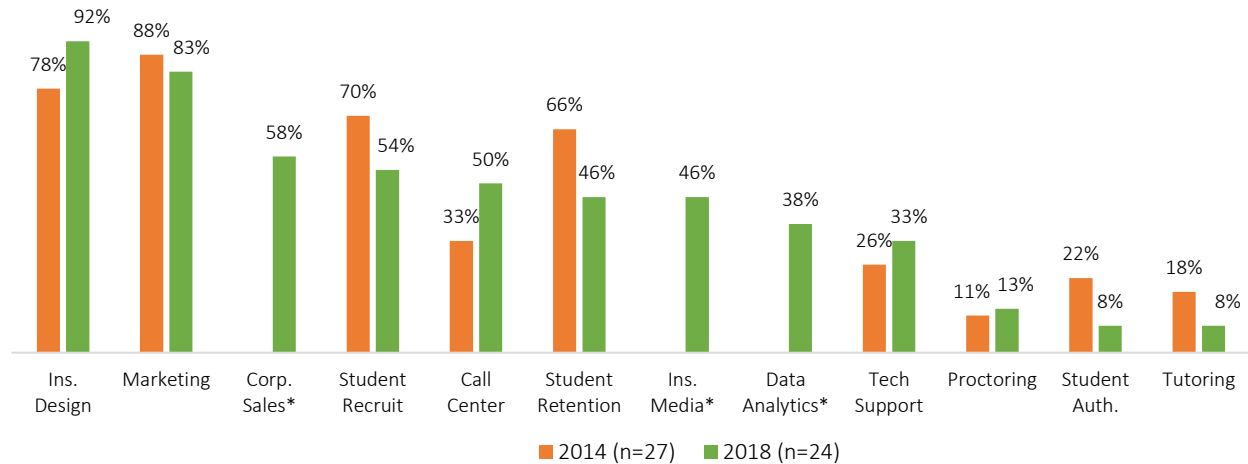
**Figure 17: Average FTE per Department, Public Institutions (2014-2018)**



*\*Only 2018 data available*

Figure 18 shows the percentage of private institutions that reported at least one employee in the department. Call centers had the largest increase with 33% of private institutions reporting a call center department in 2014 to 50% in 2018. Student retention saw the biggest decrease with 66% of private institutions reporting a student retention department in 2014 decreasing to 46% in 2018.

**Figure 18: Department Breakdown, Private Institutions**



*\*Only 2018 data available*

Figure 19 shows the average FTE staff size per department for private institutions. The department with the most FTE staff on average is instructional design with an average of 6.3 FTE staff and a median of 3. Second is student recruitment with an average of 3.7 FTE staff and a median of 1.5 followed by marketing with an average of 3.5 FTE staff and a median of 1.3. Student authentication, tutoring and proctoring are the smallest departments with average FTE staff sizes of 0.3, 0.2 and 0.1 respectively.

**Figure 19: Average FTE per Department, Private Institutions (n=24)**

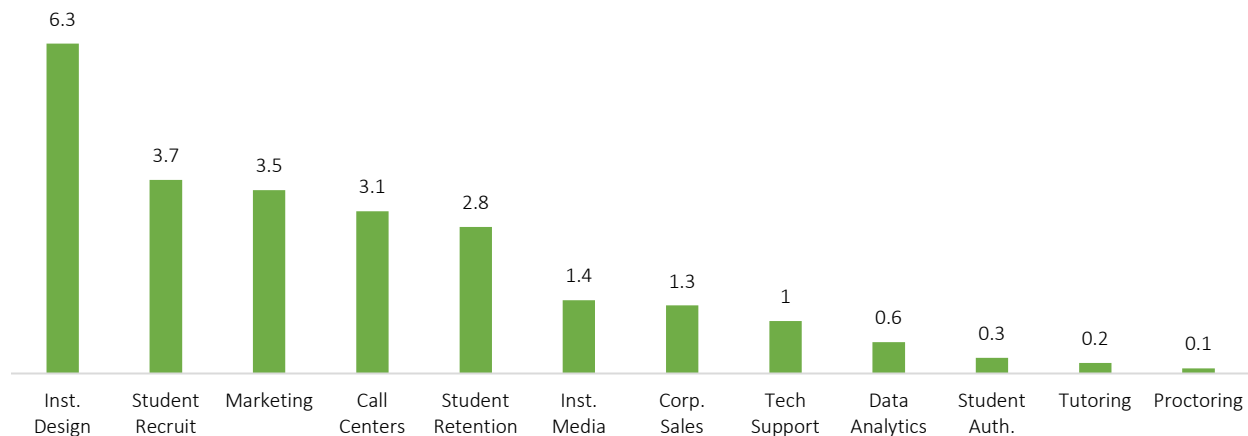
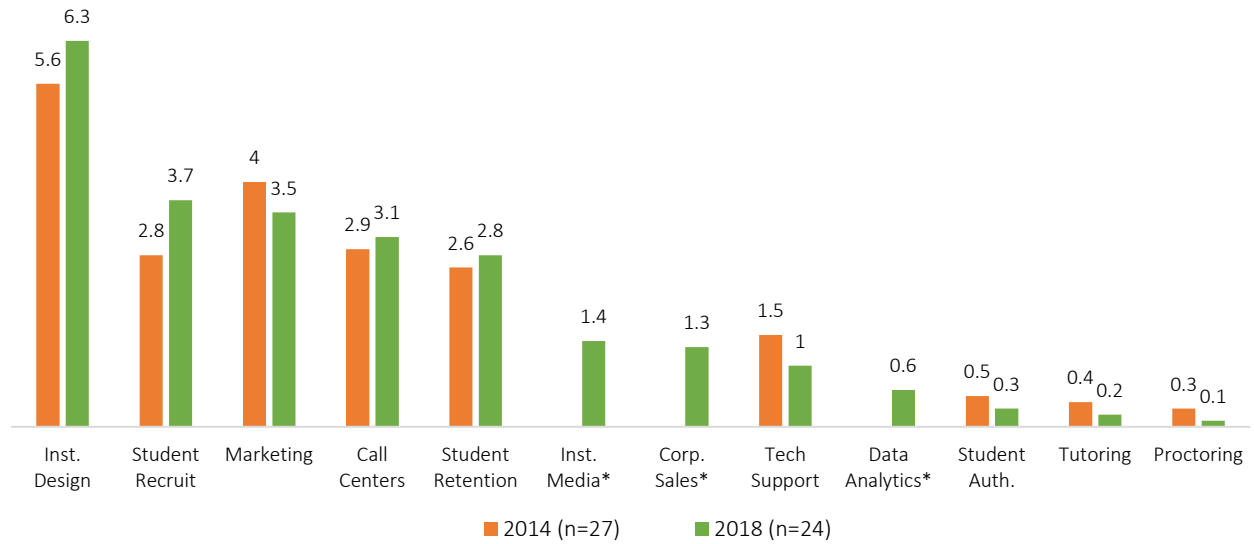


Figure 20 shows a comparison between FTE staff sizes in 2014 and 2018. The largest increase was in student recruitment with a 32% increase. Instructional design (13%) and student retention (8%) saw the next largest increases. Proctoring (-67%), tutoring (-50%) and student authentication (-40%) had the largest decreases.

**Figure 20: Average FTE per Department, Private Institutions (2014-2018)**



*\*Only 2018 data available*