

## Appendix 44-2-A: Methodology for U.S. rankings

Given the wide range of sources available for U.S. college rankings and the variety of individual needs, take the time to look at the methodology. It might mean using a variety of sources and creating personalized rankings.

### QS RELEVANT RANKINGS:

**QS World : 157 U S institutions with U.S. universities rankings from 1 to 1000.**

**Methodology:** Metric with weighting and top university in each category with World rank and (category rank)

- Citations per faculty 20%: W1 - MIT (1)
- International student ratio 5% : W421 - Illinois Institute of Technology (22)
- International faculty ratio 5%: W1 MIT (43)
- Faculty Student Ratio 20%: W-nr Baylor College of Medicine (1)
- Employer reputation Survey 10%: W3 Harvard; 95; with scores
- Academic reputation survey 40% : W3 Harvard (1); 95 with scores

NOTE: This article uses QS 2020 data. QS 2021 has 151 U.S. institutions with overall ranks and 160 with all categories

### QS World Rankings: USA 2020: 302 institutions

**Methodology:** The top 100 get individual overall scores; the rest get composite scores. There 17 metrics in four broad categories. Scores are given to the top 50 in each of the four categories, but no data. Most of the universities in the table have nothing but a shared ranking as seen in the example below:

QS USA Rankings 2020 						
# RANK	UNIVERSITY	OVERALL SCORE	RESEARCH	LEARNING EXPERIENCE	DIVERSITY & INTERNATIONALISATION	E
	Uni Search <input type="text"/>	↓	↓	↓	↓	
141-150	<a href="#">Villanova University</a>	-	-	-	-	

- Research:( 26%) :- Harvard
  - Academic reputation survey 12.5% (from World Rankings)
  - Citations per paper (7%) extracted from Scopus
  - Partnerships with employers per faculty (3%) – collaborations with 2000 top global companies from Scopus data
- Learning experience (22%) : Tie among 5 institutions: Brown, Duke, Johns Hopkins, Northwestern and Yale
  - Average instructional expenditure per FTE (10%)

- Retention (5%) from first to second year
- Pell grant student graduation rates compared with other students 3.5%
- Student-faculty ratio (3.5%)
- Employability (27%): -Harvard
  - Employer reputation survey 10% - also used in World rankings weighted at 10% with over 90 U.S. institutions ranked
  - Alumni outcomes 10% – universities that are resources for successful employees
  - Salary after 10 years 7%– average salary of grads who received federal financial aid. **RAP**: not clear if there is any consideration for pay and cost of living differentials among states
- Diversity & Internationalisation (25%): Tied for number one: NYU, UC Davis, and UCLA – includes metric that conform to UN SDG 10 – reduced inequality **RAP**: A way to get involved in SDGs but not sure it is a concern of most students looking for a college
  - Gender pay gap 2.5% - compared within an institution
  - Faculty gender diversity (2.5%) – equal representation within an institution
  - Ratio of undergraduate students receiving Pell grants 5%
  - Students’ ethnicities mix 5% - **RAP**: regional state universities could be at a disadvantage here since their ethnic mix should reflect their communities
  - Number of [Fulbright recipients](#) per institution (5%). Liberal arts students also get Fulbright scholarships
  - **Proportion of international students 5%** - also 5% in World ranking with 120 universities with scores and all U.S. university profiles including international percentages. Many of these universities are NOT in the World rankings.

QS does not list its data sources in its methodology but some are freely available from the US Student Survey, Integrated and Post-Secondary Data System (IPEDS)

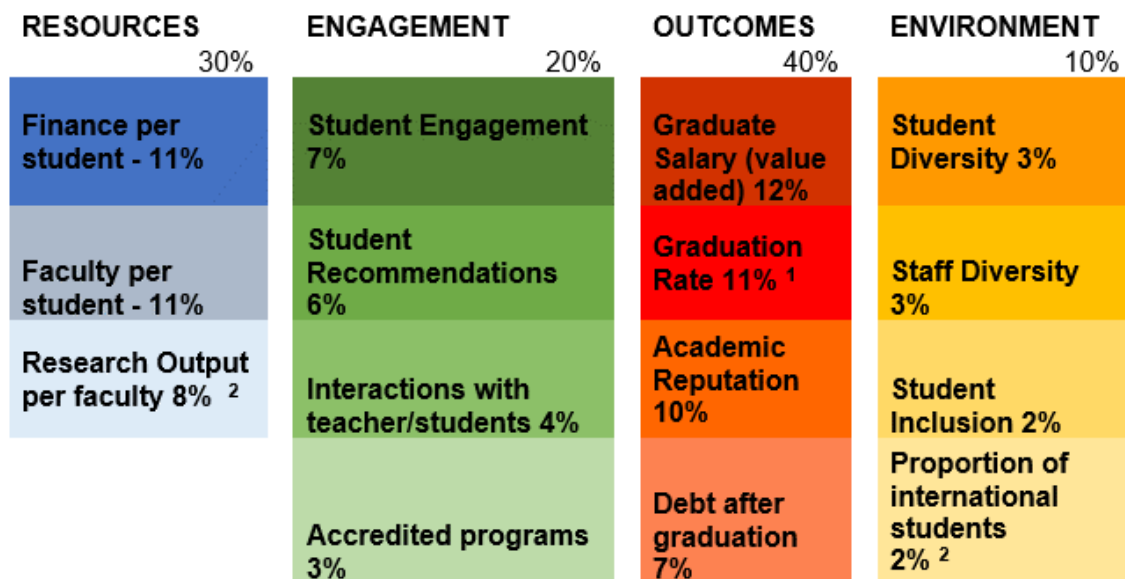
<https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/> and College Scorecard: <https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/>, and from Scopus and QS proprietary data. The entire College Scorecard is downloadable. The [data dictionary](#) is necessary to use it. UGDS-NRA is the code for percent of undergraduate degree-seeking students.

**[WSJ/THE](#) (Adapted from Table 26-1-B) Methodology** - 800 universities are ranked; top 400 have overall individual ranks; top 400 in each pillar get a score; first covered in Ruth’s Rankings [26](#)

**WSJ/THE lists its data sources:**

- *THE* US Student Survey, Integrated and Post-Secondary Data System (IPEDS) <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/>
- College Scorecard: <https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/>
- Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) <https://bea.gov/>
- *THE Academic Reputation* survey (27 ranked)
- Elsevier bibliometric data

Displayed below are the four pillars and the weightings of the component parts.



1 - Metric used by U.S. government

2. Metrics used in world rankings (with different weightings)

The website displays sortable college data (with highest and rank =- all in NY State)

- Tuition fees – Vassar College -56
- Room and board- CUNY John Jay College of Criminal Justice ->600
- Salary after 10 years – Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences – 317

**NOTE:** The number of universities included in the 2020 ranking are lower than the year before because of a lower survey response.

[https://www.timeshighereducation.com/rankings/united-states/2020#!/page/0/length/25/sort\\_by/rank/sort\\_order/asc/cols/stats](https://www.timeshighereducation.com/rankings/united-states/2020#!/page/0/length/25/sort_by/rank/sort_order/asc/cols/stats)

## U.S. NEWS RANKING CATEGORIES

Over 1900 universities, grouped in 10 different categories from national universities to regional colleges, with 15 indicators receive a score and overall rank. Each college's data are shown on an individual page. There is no way to rank on any indicator. Some indicators require subscription to [College Compass](#)

### National Grouping

- National Universities (399): Princeton
- National Liberal Arts Colleges (223) :Williams

### Regional Groupings

Region	Number	Universities Masters but few Doctoral	Number	Colleges – undergrad education; may offer two-year degrees; non liberal arts focus

North	179	Providence College (RI)	58	Cooper Union (NY)
South	136	Rollins College (FL)	124	High Point U – (NC)
Midwest	162	Butler U –(IN)	88	Taylor U (IN)
West	128	Trinity U (TX)	103	Carroll College (MT)

**More Rankings with category, number of institutions, and number one for National Universities:** These categories are available for regional universities and colleges.

- Colleges for Veterans (140): Stanford University
- Most Innovative (87) – Arizona State University
- Top Public Schools (146) - University of California Los Angeles (UCLA)
- Undergraduate Teaching (95) – Princeton University
- Best Value Schools(183) – Princeton University
- Social Mobility(381) – University of California -Riverside (six of top 10 in UC system)

To search across one list of 1921 schools and see additional rankings, click [here](#) Examples include First Year experiences with 101 universities from all the ranking groups with Agnes Scott, a liberal art college for women as number one and study abroad , with Elon (NC) as number one. While you cannot sort by any characteristics, you can filter by Tuition and Fees, Enrollment, and Acceptance Rate.

### **U.S. News 2020 Best Colleges Rankings Methodology**

#### **Ranking Factor Weights**

This table shows the relative percentage weights assigned to each of the ranking factors and subfactors for the variables used in the 2020 Best Colleges rankings of [National Universities](#), [National Liberal Arts Colleges](#), [Regional Universities](#) and [Regional Colleges](#).

RANKING FACTOR	NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES AND NATIONAL LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES INDICATOR WEIGHT	REGIONAL UNIVERSITIES AND REGIONAL COLLEGES INDICATOR WEIGHT
<b>GRADUATION AND RETENTION RATES</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>22%</b>
AVERAGE SIX-YEAR GRADUATION RATE	17.6%	17.6%
AVERAGE FIRST-YEAR STUDENT RETENTION RATE	4.4%	4.4%
<b>SOCIAL MOBILITY</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>5%</b>
PELL GRANT GRADUATION RATES	2.5%	2.5%
PELL GRANT GRADUATION RATE PERFORMANCE	2.5%	2.5%

<b>FACULTY RESOURCES FOR 2018-2019 ACADEMIC YEAR</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>20%</b>
CLASS SIZE INDEX	8%	8%
FACULTY COMPENSATION	7%	7%
PERCENT FACULTY WITH TERMINAL DEGREE IN THEIR FIELD	3%	3%
PERCENT FACULTY THAT IS FULL TIME	1%	1%
STUDENT-FACULTY RATIO	1%	1%
<b>STUDENT SELECTIVITY FOR THE FALL 2018 ENTERING CLASS</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>10%</b>
MATH AND EVIDENCE-BASED READING AND WRITING PORTIONS OF THE SAT AND THE COMPOSITE ACT SCORES	7.75%	7.75%
HIGH SCHOOL CLASS STANDING IN TOP 10%	2.25%	0%
HIGH SCHOOL CLASS STANDING IN TOP 25%	0%	2.25%
ACCEPTANCE RATE	0%	0%

The website defines each of these criteria in detail and explains the purpose for each one. U.S. News has the advantage of 35 years of experience with college rankings with continuous leadership from [Robert Morse](#).

### **FORBES America's Top Colleges 2019 - 650**

Forty percent of the ranking is based on money earned and money owed.

- Alumni Salary (20%). [College Scorecard](#) (used by QS and WSJ/THE)
- Student Satisfaction (20%) from U S IPEDS, used by QS and WSJ/THE
- Debt (20%) – rewards schools providing financial support to students, so they do not need federal loans
- American Leaders (15%) – Forbes database of successful people – a similar indicator is used by QS
- On-Time Graduation (12..5%) - (includes four- and six- year rates)
- Academic Success ( 12.5) - Alumni who receive scholarships and fellowships or have earned a PhD

Forbes ranking displays the following metrics, which can be filtered by Private not-for-profit and Public. The top university is Harvard and the top public university is University of California Berkeley (20)

- "\$Net Price", averaging in university support to students- Berklee College of Music (404) >\$47,000; Penn State U (117) \$30,000
- \$Average Debt-Texas Christian University (148) >\$14,000; The Citadel (220), \$12,000
- \$ Average Early Career Salary – Harvey Mudd University (23) -almost \$90,000; U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (66) \$81,000

**Forbes College Financial Health Grades** rating analyzed 933 private not-for profit institutions with enrollments over 500. 34 institutions received a grade of A+ and 177 received a D. Scroll down the article to come to the list. Sort by state, GPA, and grade.

[Methodology](#): uses data from [IPEDS](#)

There are nine components, for those financially inclined. Endowment assets per FTE at 15% is the most heavily weighted with Princeton as number one.

Click [here](#) for NCES endowment data that includes public universities and their systems. The data for this table has not been updated.

## OTHER RANKINGS

**Washington Monthly College Rankings** ranks over 700 institutions in categories similar to U.S. News, “based on their contribution to the public good in three broad categories: social mobility, research, and providing opportunities for public service”. Nine indicators are used with a mix from the other rankers and a unique Service rank.

- National Universities (250) Stanford
- Liberal Arts Colleges (214) William & Mary
- Master’s Universities (250) Evergreen State, comparable to US News Regional universities
- Bachelor’s Colleges (216) – Cooper Union, comparable to US News Regional colleges

Since one third of college students are now over the age of 25, there is a ranking of 60 institutions for adult learners, with a unique set of indicators.

All tables are downloadable which is useful since the website is not interactive.

**Niche** Best Colleges in America provides an interactive website. Universities get ranked and graded. Grades are distributed along a bell-shaped curve with B to B- being average. There is a wide selection of mixing rankings and filters. You can select the best college dorms for low income international students. Student reviews are provided along with an in-depth explanation of the ranking [methodology](#).

**Princeton Review** The Best Colleges highlights the qualitative side of college life such as party schools, best food, best library and happiest students. It has 62 rankings based on student reviews for 385 institutions. The Best school list is based on popularity. Registration is required to see the lists. It also ranks most accessible faculty. While other rankings use faculty/ student ratio, it does not matter what the ratio is if the faculty are not available. They are best known for the ranking of party schools. They also rank schools by race/class interaction and on religious students. 20 institutions are on each lists. Rank order is based entirely on students’ results to specific questions that are shown in the [methodology](#).

International students should be aware [of ICE](#), U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Students and Exchange Visitors program.