



Chapter 12 Academic & Reputational Rankings

The publication of university and college rankings has grown increasingly popular since *U.S. News & World Report* released the results of its first reputational survey of U.S. universities in 1983. While some rankings today remain a compilation of opinions, most rankings (*USN&WR* included) now blend survey results and quantitative data. The sponsor of each ranking sorts and organizes the data by its chosen methodology and creates an ordered list of institutions that reflects the aspects of universities and academic programs it considers most important.

In this chapter, we provide results from several well-known rankings, some of which have been published for many years. Unfortunately, rankings are not trustworthy indicators of whether a particular school is right for any given student. Also, the arbitrary way that the rankings are calculated prevents using them for meaningful comparisons of schools on the list.

Due to the way rankings are compiled, a slight change in one or more of the numerous variables in the “formula” can affect rankings from one year to the next, even when the universities themselves have not changed greatly.

There is no such thing as a single “No. 1” school for everyone, no matter what a student chooses to study. What matters most in choosing a school is the match between the particular interests, abilities, and ambitions of each student with the specific programs, approaches and opportunities offered by a particular school. The underlying information that is often included with the publication of each ordered list probably has more value than the list itself because it permits the reader to examine specific characteristics of each institution.

★ *Chart updated since the March 2016 edition.*

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The U-M is one of the nation's leading public universities, according to the *U.S. News & World Report* ranking methodology.

12.1.1 U.S. News & World Report Rankings for National Undergraduate Universities, U-M and Peers¹, 2011-15.

University (<i>Privates in italics</i>)	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	
					All	Public
<i>Princeton University</i>	1	1	1	1	1	--
<i>Harvard University</i>	1	1	2	2	2	--
<i>Yale University</i>	3	3	3	3	3	--
<i>Columbia University</i>	4	4	4	4	4	--
<i>University of Chicago</i>	5	4	5	4	4	--
<i>Stanford University</i>	5	6	5	4	4	--
<i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	5	8	7	8	9	--
<i>Northwestern University</i>	12	12	12	13	12	--
<i>Cornell University</i>	15	15	16	15	15	--
University of California-Berkeley	21	21	20	20	20	1
University of California-Los Angeles	25	24	23	23	23	2
University of Virginia	25	24	23	23	26	2
MICHIGAN	28	29	28	29	29	4
University of North Carolina	29	30	30	30	30	5
University of Illinois	45	46	41	42	41	11
University of Wisconsin	42	41	41	47	41	11
University of Washington	42	46	52	48	52	16
University of Minnesota	68	68	69	71	69	25
Indiana University	75	83	75	76	75	27

SOURCE: *U.S. News & World Report*, America's Best Colleges (2012-2016 Editions).

The *U.S. News & World Report* (*USN&WR*) ranking system for national universities (that is, universities that offer a full range of undergraduate majors, as well as master's and Ph.D. programs, and emphasize faculty research) is based on indicators chosen by *USN&WR* to reflect the academic quality of each institution.

The current indicators (and their contribution to the overall ranking) include: a survey of administrators at peer institutions (15%); a survey of counselors from top public high schools and colleges (7.5%); retention of students (22.5%); faculty resources (20%), comprised of class size, student-faculty ratio, average faculty pay, proportion of faculty who are full-time and hold the highest degree in their field; student selectivity (12.5%), based on SAT and ACT scores of enrolled students, rank in high school graduating classes, and the university's acceptance rate; average spending per student on instruction, research and student

services (10%); graduation rate performance (7.5%), which compares a predicted graduation rate to the actual rate; and alumni giving rate (5%). Additional detail on how these items are used to calculate the rankings can be found on the *USN&WR* web site or the annual rankings publication.

The U-M consistently ranks in the top five of public universities according *USN&WR* methodology. Michigan receives high marks for freshman retention, graduation rate, the percentage of freshmen in the top 10 percent of their high school graduating classes, and its academic reputation.

¹ A list of the "official" peers used for comparison on this page is found in Appendix A. Private universities are in italics.

Of more than 130 U-M graduate programs scored by *U.S. News & World Report*, 103 are ranked in the top ten. Only UC-Berkeley and Stanford have more top-ten ranked graduate programs.

★ 12.1.2 *U.S. News & World Report* Rankings of U-M Top Ten Graduate Programs, 2016.

GRADUATE PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS			
Business		Medicine	Law 8
Accounting	5	Primary Care	4
Entrepreneurship	9	Family Medicine	8
Executive M.B.A.	6	Geriatrics	4
Finance	9	Internal Medicine	6
International	7	Women's Health	6
Management	5	Public Health	4
Marketing	6	Healthcare Management	1
Nonprofit	8	Social Work	1
Part-time M.B.A.	5	Pharmacy	3
Production/Operations	4		
Supply Chain/Logistics	5		
			Law 8
			International Law 6
			Tax Law 9
			Nursing
			Doctor of Nursing Practice 10
			Master's 7
			Nursing Service Admin. 6
			Nursing Informatics 10
			Nursing-Midwifery 1
			Nurse Practitioner – Gerontology, Primary Care 9

GRADUATE PROGRAMS in Science, Engineering, Information, Education, Public Policy			
Engineering	6	Science	
Aerospace Engineering	4	Analytical Chemistry	7
Biomedical Engineering	9	Organic Chemistry	9
Civil Engineering	8	Earth Sciences	8
Computer Engineering	7	Geochemistry	5
Electrical Engineering	6	Geology	2
Environmental Engineering	5	Paleontology	3
Industrial Engineering	2	Mathematics	9
Materials Engineering	9	Algebra/Number Theory	8
Mechanical Engineering	4	Analysis	10
Nuclear Engineering	1	Applied Mathematics	10
Library & Info. Studies	4	Discr. Math/Combinations	5
Archives & Preservation	1	Atomic Physics	10
Digital Librarianship	4	Computer Science-Systems	10
Health Librarianship	4		
Information Systems	1		
			Education
			Curriculum & Instruction 5
			Education Policy 6
			Educational Psychology 2
			Elem. Teacher Education 3
			Higher Education Admin. 1
			Secondary Teacher Education 2
			Public Policy 8
			Environ. Policy & Mgmt. 5
			Health Policy & Management 5
			Information & Tech. Mgmt. 9
			Public Finance & Budgeting 10
			Public Policy Analysis 3
			Social Policy 1

SOURCE: *U.S. News & World Report*, America's Best Grad Schools (2017 Edition).

U.S. News & World Report publishes rankings of more than 1,200 graduate programs offered by U.S. universities. Programs in business, education, engineering, law, and medicine are evaluated and scored each year based on surveys of administrators, academics and professionals as well as data that reflect the quality of a program's faculty, students and research.

Rankings of programs in the sciences, social sciences, other health fields, the humanities and the arts are conducted periodically; in 2016, *USN&WR* updated public affairs and health rankings, as well as adding the Doctor of Nursing Practice ranking. All other programs listed on this and the following page were ranked prior to 2016 and republished here and on the next page.

★12.1.2 *U.S. News & World Report* Rankings of U-M Top-Ten Graduate Programs, 2016 (continued).

GRADUATE PROGRAMS in the Social Sciences and Humanities					
Economics		Sociology	4	History	7
International Economics	6	Economic Sociology	7	African History	2
Labor Economics	6	Historical Sociology	3	African-American History	3
Public Finance	5	Sex & Gender	5	Asian History	9
Political Science	4	Social Stratification	3	Cultural History	2
American Politics	3	Sociology of Population	1	European History	3
Comparative Politics	7	English		Latin American History	6
International Politics	6	American Lit. After 1865	10	Modern U.S. History	6
Political Methodology	3	American Lit. Before 1865	10	U.S. Colonial History	7
Psychology	4	Gender & Literature	3	Women's History	3
Behavioral Neuroscience	3	Medieval/Renaissance Lit.	10		
Cognitive Psychology	5				
Developmental Psychology	2				
Social Psychology	1				

SOURCE: U.S. News & World Report, America's Best Grad Schools (2017 Edition).

The University is a top-20 institution globally according to a new “global” rankings report published by *U.S. News & World Report*.

✦ 12.1.3 *U.S. News & World Report* Rankings of Best Global Universities, U-M and Peers¹, 2015-16.

University (<i>Privates in italics</i>)	2015	2016
<i>Harvard University</i>	1	1
University of California Berkeley	3	3
<i>Stanford University</i>	4	4
University of California Los Angeles	8	8
<i>Columbia University</i>	10	9
<i>University of Chicago</i>	9	10
University of Washington	14	11
<i>Princeton University</i>	13	13
<i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	19	14
<i>Yale University</i>	17	14
University of Michigan	14	17
<i>Cornell University</i>	23	21
<i>Northwestern University</i>	25	25
University of Wisconsin	27	26
University of North Carolina	32	27
University of Minnesota	29	29
University of Illinois	35	43
University of Virginia	102	94
Indiana University	114	109

SOURCE: *U.S. News & World Report*, 2016 report.

U.S. News & World Report recently added a global university comparison to its stable of rankings. The new list concentrates “specifically on schools’ academic research and reputation overall and not on their separate undergraduate or graduate programs,” according to the publisher.

For the global ranking, *U.S. News* starts with data from the Thomson Reuters InCites™ database, such as reputation survey results, which represent 25% of a school’s ranking score. Other items in the formula include counts of published scholarly papers, books and conference proceedings (15%); several different counts of citations to published materials (40%); counts of international collaborations (10%); and

counts of Ph.D.s awarded and Ph.D.s awarded per faculty member (10%). These figures are then further adjusted because the publishers think the data needs this manipulation.

Note that the list order above differs from from the order of USN&WR “Best Universities,” as shown in Figure 12.1.1. Why this order makes sense for a global list even as it contradicts other USN&WR lists is not explained by the publisher.

³ A list of the “official” peers used for comparison on this page is found in Appendix A. Private universities are in italics.

The University is a top-25 institution globally according to the Times Higher Education quantitative rankings.

12.2.1 Times Higher Education (London) World University Rankings, U-M and Peers³, 2011-15.

University (<i>Privates in italics</i>)	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<i>Stanford University</i>	2	2	4	4	3
<i>Harvard University</i>	2	4	2	2	6
<i>Princeton University</i>	5	6	6	7	7
<i>University of Chicago</i>	9	10	9	11	10
<i>Yale University</i>	11	11	11	9	12
University of California Berkeley	10	9	8	8	13
<i>Columbia University</i>	12	14	13	14	15
University of California Los Angeles	13	13	12	12	16
<i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	16	15	16	16	17
Cornell University	20	18	19	19	18
University of Michigan	18	20	18	17	21
<i>Northwestern University</i>	26	19	22	21	25
University of Washington	25	24	25	26	32
University of Illinois	31	33	29	29	36
University of Wisconsin	27	31	30	29	50
University of North Carolina	43	42	47	46	63
University of Minnesota	42	47	46	46	65
University of Virginia	135	118	112	130	147
Indiana University	123	134	132	150	201-250

SOURCE: Times Higher Education.

Times Higher Education calculates two separate rankings based on two different methodologies. The World University Rankings (above) judges institutions on their research, teaching, knowledge transfer and international activity. The World Reputation Rankings (see chart 12.2.2) is based on the results of an international, invitation-only survey sent to tens of thousands of experienced academics from around the world.

The World University Rankings shown on this page employ 13 performance indicators in five groups: Teaching (worth 30% of the overall ranking score); Research (30%); Citations (30%); Industry income (2.5%); and International outlook (7.5%).

³ A list of the “official” peers used for comparison on this page is found in Appendix A. Private universities are in italics.

The U-M ranks 14th in the world according to the most recent Times Higher Education rankings based on academic reputation.

✦ 12.2.2 Times Higher Education (London) World Reputation Rankings, U-M and Peers⁴, 2012-16.

University (<i>Privates in italics</i>)	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<i>Harvard University</i>	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Stanford University</i>	4	6	3	5	3
University of California Berkeley	5	5	6	6	6
<i>Princeton University</i>	7	7	7	7	7
<i>Yale University</i>	10	10	8	8	8
<i>Columbia University</i>	15	13	12	10	9
<i>University of Chicago</i>	14	14	14	11	11
University of California Los Angeles	9	8	10	13	13
University of Michigan	12	12	15	19	14
<i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	19	18	22	23	16
Cornell University	16	17	17	20	17
University of Washington	28	27	31	33	29
University of Illinois	23	24	23	30	30
<i>Northwestern University</i>	35	37	37	47	30
University of Wisconsin	27	30	28	38	35
University of Minnesota	47	51-60	51-60	71-80	49
University of North Carolina	46	51-60	61-70	61-70	51-60
Indiana University	--	--	71-80	--	81-90
University of Virginia	--	--	--	--	--

SOURCE: Times Higher Education.

The World Reputation Rankings (above) are based on subjective judgments collected from an invitation-only survey returned by more than 10,000 academics from around the world for the 2016 edition, distributed to reflect the demographics of world scholarship.

The survey asks each respondent to name no more than 10 universities that he or she considers to be the “best.” The rankings are assembled based on the frequency that each institution is included on the respondent’s lists of best institutions in their fields.

⁴ A list of the “official” peers used for comparison on this page is found in Appendix A. Private universities are in italics.

Michigan regularly scores highly based on the QS methodology, which attributes 80 percent of the ranking to academic reputation, citation frequency of faculty publications, and the student-faculty ratio.

12.3 QS (Quacquarelli Symonds) World University Rankings, U-M and Peers⁵, 2011-15.

University (<i>Privates in italics</i>)	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<i>Harvard University</i>	2	3	2	4	2
<i>Stanford University</i>	11	15	7	7	3
<i>University of Chicago</i>	8	8	9	11	10
<i>Princeton University</i>	13	9	10	9	11
<i>Yale University</i>	4	7	8	10	15
<i>Cornell University</i>	15	14	15	19	17
<i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	9	12	13	13	18
<i>Columbia University</i>	10	11	14	14	22
University of California-Berkeley	21	22	25	27	26
University of California-Los Angeles	34	31	40	37	27
MICHIGAN	14	17	22	23	30
<i>Northwestern University</i>	24	27	29	34	32
University of Wisconsin	41	38	37	41	54
University of Illinois	61	56	56	63	59
University of Washington	56	59	59	65	65
University of North Carolina	55	57	54	62	79
University of Minnesota	102	104	102	119	123
University of Virginia	126	123	132	141	172
Indiana University	216	210	240	272	263

SOURCE: QS Intelligence Unit.

The QS World University Rankings® (also now published by *U.S. News & World Report*) evaluates more than 800 universities in the world, ranking the top 400. A school's rank is based on an amalgamation of six indicators obtained through a global survey and data collected about each institution. The six components and the weight provided to the overall score are: Academic reputation based on the survey (40% or score); Employer reputation based on the survey (10%); Citations per faculty member according to the SciVerse Scopus database (20%); Student-Faculty ratio (20%); Proportion of international students (5%); and Proportion of international scholars and scientists on the faculty. U-M is the highest ranked U.S. public university, according to QS.

⁵ A list of the "official" peers used for comparison on this page is found in Appendix A. Private universities are in italics.

The U-M consistently scores in the top 25 of universities worldwide and in the top 20 of U.S. universities according to the rankings published by Shanghai Jiao Tong University.

✦ 12.4 Academic Ranking of World Universities, U-M and Peers⁶, 2012-16.

University (<i>Privates in italics</i>)	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<i>Harvard University</i>	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Stanford University</i>	2	2	2	2	2
<i>University of California-Berkeley</i>	4	4	4	4	3
<i>Princeton University</i>	7	7	6	6	6
<i>Columbia University</i>	8	8	8	8	9
<i>University of Chicago</i>	9	9	9	9	10
<i>Yale University</i>	11	11	11	11	11
<i>University of California-Los Angeles</i>	12	12	12	14	12
<i>Cornell University</i>	13	12	13	13	13
<i>University of Washington</i>	16	16	15	15	15
<i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	14	15	16	17	18
MICHIGAN	22	23	22	22	23
<i>Northwestern University</i>	30	30	28	27	26
<i>University of Wisconsin</i>	19	19	24	24	28
<i>University of Illinois</i>	25	25	28	29	30
<i>University of Minnesota</i>	29	29	30	30	33
<i>University of North Carolina</i>	41	43	36	39	35
<i>Indiana University</i>	84	85	101-150	101-150	101-150
<i>University of Virginia</i>	101-150	101-150	101-150	101-150	151-200

SOURCE: Center for World-Class Universities, Shanghai Jiao Tong University.

The Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) is based on six numerical elements (listed with the percent weight of the element in parentheses): the number of alumni winning Nobel Prizes and Fields Medals (10%), number of faculty winning Nobel Prizes and Fields Medals (20%), number of highly cited researchers in 21 broad subject categories according to Thomson Scientific (20%), number of articles published in journals of *Nature* and *Science* over the most recent five-year period (20%), number of articles indexed in Science Citation Index-Expanded and Social Sciences Citation Index (20%), and per capita academic

performance of an institution (10%), determined by adding the weighted scores of all of the other indicators and dividing the sum by the number of full-time equivalent academic staff. More than 1,000 universities are ranked by ARWU every year and the best 500 are published on the web.

The University of Michigan ranking in particular reflects high scores on the elements that measure citations of articles by U-M faculty across all disciplines.

⁶ A list of the “official” peers used for comparison on this page is found in Appendix A. Private universities are in italics.

A large proportion of University of Michigan graduate programs received high marks from the National Research Council assessment.

12.5 National Research Council (NRC) Graduate Program Assessment, U-M and Peers⁷, 2005-06.

University (<i>Privates in italics</i>)	Number of Programs Ranked	Percent of Programs where best S (survey) Ranking was in		Percent of Programs where best R (Direct) Ranking was in	
		Top half	Top quartile	Top half	Top quartile
University of Wisconsin	78	90%	77%	95%	74%
University of Minnesota	69	77%	51%	80%	55%
MICHIGAN	65	98%	82%	100%	92%
<i>Cornell University</i>	61	90%	69%	95%	80%
University of California-Los Angeles	59	93%	76%	93%	85%
University of Washington	59	93%	76%	95%	75%
University of Illinois	58	91%	62%	91%	79%
<i>Harvard University</i>	52	100%	100%	100%	100%
University of California-Berkeley	52	100%	94%	100%	98%
University of North Carolina	51	86%	67%	100%	76%
<i>Yale University</i>	49	100%	80%	100%	82%
<i>Columbia University</i>	47	94%	81%	96%	74%
<i>Stanford University</i>	47	100%	94%	100%	91%
Indiana University	44	80%	48%	91%	57%
Average of All AAU Institutions	42	86%	61%	89%	64%
<i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	41	100%	90%	100%	85%
University of Virginia	38	76%	42%	95%	55%
<i>University of Chicago</i>	37	95%	78%	95%	86%
<i>Princeton University</i>	35	100%	91%	97%	94%
<i>Northwestern University</i>	31	97%	84%	97%	90%

SOURCE: National Research Council.

The National Research Council’s Assessment of U.S. Research-Doctorate Programs was undertaken to provide universities with benchmarking data that they could use to improve program quality, and to provide prospective students and the public with information about the nation’s doctoral programs.

The data used for the assessment was collected from 5,004 doctoral programs at 212 universities for the academic year 2005-2006. The data include characteristics of the faculty, such as their publications, citations, grants, and diversity; characteristics of the students, such as their GRE scores, financial support, publications, and diversity; and characteristics of the programs, such as number of Ph.D. degrees granted over five years, time to degree completion, percentage of students who complete graduate programs, and placement of students after graduation.

The methodology to arrive at a program’s rank is complex and elicited criticism from the higher education community when first made public. Following revisions to the original 2010 report, a final version was released in 2011.

The S-ranking is based on a national survey of faculty members who were asked to weigh programs on measures such as number of faculty, number of publications, citations, and other quantifiable measures.

Using another approach, the R-ranking is based on asking randomly selected faculty members in each discipline to rate programs from a sample provided. A regression analysis of these ratings provided different program rankings.

All of the programs at each school were counted as “in” or “out” of the top half or the top quartile of the rankings. The percent of each school’s programs to satisfy these two indicators is reported in the table. Furthermore, when the percentage of programs was at least one standard deviation better than the average of all AAU institutions, the percentage is displayed in a green rectangle.

⁷ A list of the “official” peers used for comparison on this page is found in Appendix A. Private universities are in italics.

The scope of U-M’s research program and high number of Ph.D. degree recipients contribute most to the University’s position in the *Washington Monthly* ranking, which focuses on universities’ contributions to society.

12.6 *Washington Monthly* National University Rankings, U-M and Peers⁸, 2011-2015.

University (<i>Privates in italics</i>)	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
University of California-Berkeley	3	5	5	3	4
<i>Stanford University</i>	4	3	6	6	5
University of California-Los Angeles	2	6	10	5	6
University of Washington	23	8	13	7	7
<i>Harvard University</i>	6	11	8	10	8
University of North Carolina	12	4	14	12	11
MICHIGAN	10	13	12	13	13
University of Wisconsin	29	18	15	17	19
<i>Princeton University</i>	31	20	31	27	26
University of Illinois	38	22	19	26	27
University of Minnesota	45	28	56	35	29
<i>Cornell University</i>	17	19	43	39	36
<i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	21	27	21	41	37
<i>Yale University</i>	39	41	54	57	44
<i>Columbia University</i>	26	36	32	51	49
<i>University of Chicago</i>	25	29	46	53	55
University of Virginia	53	48	51	60	63
<i>Northwestern University</i>	67	75	58	101	106
Indiana University	108	84	127	124	107

SOURCE: Washington Monthly.

Washington Monthly rates schools based on their contributions to the public good in three broad categories: Social Mobility, Research, and Service, each providing one-third of a school’s score.

The Social Mobility component attempts to measure an institution’s success at recruiting and graduating low-income students. It looks at the percentage of students receiving Pell Grants and predicts the likelihood that these students will graduate based on SAT scores and graduation rates of past Pell Grant recipients.

The Research component attempts to measure the eventual contribution of a school’s graduates to cutting-edge scholarship by combining a school’s total research expenditures with the number of bachelor’s degree recipients who continue their education and earn Ph.D degrees.

The Service component weighs a school’s success at encouraging its students to give something back to the country. Service is based on factors such as the rate by which students and alumni serve in the Peace Corps, ROTC, and work study-funded community service projects, the rate of staff members involved in community service and the number of academic courses that incorporate a service feature.

⁸ A list of the “official” peers used for comparison on this page is found in Appendix A. Private universities are in italics.

Michigan ranks highly in the estimation of recruiters contacted by the *Wall Street Journal*.

12.7 Top Recruiter Picks (*Wall Street Journal*), U-M and Peers⁹, 2010.

University (<i>Privates in italics</i>)	Rank or Range
University of Illinois	3
MICHIGAN	6
<i>Cornell University</i>	14
University of California-Berkeley	15
University of Wisconsin	16
University of California-Los Angeles	17
University of Virginia	19
University of North Carolina	25
Columbia University	27-45
Indiana University	27-45
<i>Stanford University</i>	27-45
University of Minnesota	27-45
<i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	27-45
<i>Harvard University</i>	46+
<i>Northwestern University</i>	46+
<i>University of Chicago</i>	46+
<i>Princeton University</i>	--
University of Washington	--
<i>Yale University</i>	--

SOURCE: *Wall Street Journal*.

The *Wall Street Journal* surveyed recruiters of major corporations in 2010, asking them to rate universities according to the quality of their graduates. In reporting the survey results, WSJ wrote: “State universities have become the favorite of companies recruiting new hires because their big student populations and focus on teaching practical skills gives the companies more bang for their recruiting buck.”

⁹ A list of the “official” peers used for comparison on this page is found in Appendix A. Private universities are in italics.

Michigan performs well according to the “return on investment” metrics that are the focus of *Forbes’ America’s Top Colleges* list.

✦ 12.8 America’s Top Colleges (*Forbes*), U-M and Peers¹⁰, 2012-2016.

University (<i>Privates in italics</i>)	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<i>Stanford University</i>	3	1	2	3	1
<i>Princeton University</i>	1	3	4	4	3
<i>Harvard University</i>	6	8	7	6	4
<i>Yale University</i>	5	4	6	5	6
<i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	17	11	12	12	11
<i>Northwestern University</i>	22	17	19	16	15
<i>Columbia University</i>	8	5	20	15	16
<i>University of Chicago</i>	4	14	24	20	20
<i>Cornell University</i>	51	19	31	25	29
University of Virginia	36	29	40	36	36
University of California-Berkeley	50	22	37	35	40
MICHIGAN	57	30	45	41	44
University of California-Los Angeles	45	34	44	45	46
University of North Carolina	47	38	50	49	47
University of Wisconsin	147	68	70	69	69
University of Illinois	86	53	68	68	72
University of Washington	87	55	73	76	75
Indiana University	144	97	107	112	115
University of Minnesota	258	109	108	130	119

SOURCE: *Forbes*.

America’s Top Colleges is a ranking of 660 colleges and universities (in 2016) that *Forbes* and the Washington, D.C.-based Center for College Affordability and Productivity (CCAP) have produced since 2008. The distinction that *Forbes* make about its list is the focus on how well colleges and universities succeed at yielding successful graduates. Put bluntly, America’s Top Colleges attempts to rank institutions by the return on investment of time and money to attend a school.

The components of the rankings can vary somewhat from year-to-year. The breakdown described here applies only to the 2016 rankings, which includes the satisfaction expressed by students about their educational experience (25% of the ranking score), the four-year graduation rate (7.5%), career success by the school’s graduates (32.5%), student debt accrued and loan default rates (25%), and academic success of students as indicated by counts of students who earn prestigious scholarships and fellowships (10%).

¹⁰ A list of the “official” peers used for comparison on this page is found in Appendix A. Private universities are in italics.

The U-M ranks in the top twenty of an international list of leading universities that is based on several measures of faculty and alumni achievements.

★ 12.9 Center for World University Rankings, U-M and Peers¹¹, 2012-2016.

University (<i>Privates in italics</i>)	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<i>Harvard University</i>	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Stanford University</i>	2	2	2	2	2
<i>Columbia University</i>	9	6	6	6	6
University of California-Berkeley	10	7	7	7	7
<i>University of Chicago</i>	11	9	8	8	8
<i>Princeton University</i>	6	8	9	9	9
<i>Yale University</i>	8	10	10	11	10
<i>Cornell University</i>	12	13	11	10	12
<i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	13	12	14	14	14
University of California-Los Angeles	19	16	15	15	15
MICHIGAN	34	32	21	19	19
<i>Northwestern University</i>	33	28	23	22	21
University of Wisconsin	25	23	25	25	25
University of Washington	39	31	32	31	27
University of Illinois	26	24	28	33	34
University of North Carolina	36	34	45	40	38
University of Virginia	84	71	41	41	40
University of Minnesota	49	44	49	48	45
Indiana University	-	85	113	106	123

SOURCE: Center for World University Rankings.

The Center for World University Rankings (CWUR) uses a methodology that it believes is resistant to manipulation on the part of the universities being evaluated. CWUR foregoes any opinion surveys, relying on data about quality of education, alumni employment, faculty awards and publications, among other factors.

The education quality measure is based on a weighted measure of alumni who have won major international awards, prizes, and medals. Alumni employment is a weighted count of alumni who have held CEO positions at the world's top companies.

The faculty quality factor is based on a weighted count of prestigious awards received by an institution's faculty members, from Nobel Prizes to the many other less well-known, but still significant international awards (e.g. Draper Prize, Kyoto Prize, Fields Medal).

Other factors that go into the ranking calculation include a count of research publications in major journals, the frequency that papers are cited by others, and a count of international patent filings.

¹¹ A list of the "official" peers used for comparison on this page is found in Appendix A. Private universities are in italics.

The U-M ranks sixth among all public universities and colleges as a good value for students.

12.10 Kiplinger's Best Value Public Colleges, U-M, Public Peer¹² and Public Big Ten Universities, 2012-2016.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
University of North Carolina†	1	1	1	1	1
University of Virginia†	3	2	2	2	3
University of California-Berkeley†	7	8	9	4	4
MICHIGAN*	16	11	6	6	5
University of California-Los Angeles†	9	6	5	5	6
University of Maryland*	8	5	7	9	7
University of Wisconsin†*	13	13	8	8	8
University of Washington†	14	17	13	11	9
Ohio State University*	37	37	26	15	17
Purdue University*	60	51	40	27	19
University of Minnesota†*	54	45	44	32	25
University of Illinois†*	27	43	38	36	26
Michigan State University*	49	46	41	50	40
Indiana University†*	40	39	37	40	44
Rutgers University*	43	50	47	43	47
Pennsylvania State University*	51	48	53	56	49
University of Iowa*	47	49	56	86	57
University of Nebraska*	68	75	83	68	75

SOURCE: *Kiplinger's Personal Finance*.

The “best value” rankings published by *Kiplinger's Personal Finance* starts with a pool of 1,200 public and private four-year universities and colleges that it obtains from Peterson's, an educational data company and guide publisher. Criteria that indicate a school's “academic quality” and cost to students is used to rank schools, with 55 percent of the ranking on “quality criteria” and the remainder on “cost criteria.” In the end, Kiplinger's provides a list of the top 300 public and private schools, as well as three separate lists of the top 50 private universities, top 50 liberal arts colleges, and top 100 public universities.

Academic quality indicators include the admission rate (percentage of applicants offered admission) and “yield” (percentage of those admitted who enroll) for each school, SAT and ACT scores of enrolled students, four-year graduate rate, freshman retention rate, and student-to-faculty ratio.

Cost indicators include the total cost of attendance (tuition, fees, room and board, books), the amounts of need-based grants, non-need-based aid, the percentage of students who borrow to finance their educations, and the average student debt at graduation.

For the public university rankings, excerpted above, only the costs for in-state students is considered. Kiplinger's also publishes rankings for out-of-state students attending public universities (to offer a way to compare to private universities), although those rankings are not included here.

† indicates a U-M peer university

* indicates a Big Ten university

¹² A list of the “official” peers used for comparison on this page is found in Appendix A.

MONEY Magazine ranks the U-M first among all U.S. public universities and colleges, and second overall.

✦ **12.11 MONEY's Best Colleges, U-M, Peer¹³ and Big Ten Universities, 2014-16.**

	2014	2015	2016
<i>Princeton University</i> †	4	3	1
University of Michigan †*	22	18	2
<i>Harvard University</i> †	6	6	3
University of California-Berkeley†	13	9	5
University of Virginia†	16	17	9
<i>Stanford University</i> †	5	1	10
<i>Yale University</i> †	15	21	12
University of Maryland*	68	54	19
University of California-Los Angeles†	31	26	20
University of Illinois†*	76	75	22
<i>University of Pennsylvania</i> †	11	12	26
University of Washington†	47	56	30
University of North Carolina†	40	46	45
Purdue University*	76	101	51
<i>Columbia University</i> †	22	28	52
Michigan State University*	122	109	54
University of Minnesota†*	183	191	58
University of Wisconsin†*	99	116	63
<i>Cornell University</i> †	24	34	64
<i>Northwestern University</i> †*	129	89	70
Indiana University†*	169	157	77
<i>University of Chicago</i> †	101	127	83
Rutgers University*	86	105	105
Ohio State University*	144	134	130
University of Iowa*	156	318	198
Pennsylvania State University*	177	157	220
University of Nebraska*	223	318	364

SOURCE: MONEY Magazine.

MONEY Magazine made changes to its methodology for the 2016 list, which contributed to the large changes to the placement of many schools. It uses 24 factors across three categories: quality of education (such as graduation rate, academic preparation of the student body, and student-faculty ratio); affordability (such as net price of a degree, student and parent debt at graduation, risk of loan default, and net price to low-income families); and outcomes (such as

PayScale.com earnings reports of alumni, career services offered and a "market" valuation of alumni skills).

Italics indicates a private university; † indicates a U-M peer university; * indicates a Big Ten university.

¹³ A list of the "official" peers used for comparison on this page is found in Appendix A.

