



Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives

Loyola University Chicago 2021-22 U.S. News & World Report Ranking Update

Prepared by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness

The 2021-22 U.S. News rankings shows that Loyola University rose from 112th to 103rd in their survey of national universities. Table 1 (below) shows Loyola's scores in the different categories used by US News to rank national universities. This year, Loyola was ranked 103rd with an overall score of 60 (Loyola's score last year was 59). In most categories, Loyola's metrics and rankings this year are close to their values last year, with the three largest decreases in the faculty resources rank (155th to 176th), the graduate indebtedness (213th to 228th) and the social mobility rank (154th to 220th) and the largest increase in the student excellence rank (116th to 100th). Table 2 shows Loyola's rank as a percentage of national universities.

Here we look more deeply into each of the metrics used to compute the US News rankings. At the end of this document is a much more detailed description of the methodology employed by US News to determine rankings.

The overall numerical score: US News uses a number of parameters to rank schools; they publish the weights assigned to each factor, but they do not provide details on how they convert these factors into a numerical score. Loyola's numerical score increased from 59 last year to 60 this year. This is the highest score Loyola has achieved. Most of Loyola's peer universities experienced only small changes in this score or remained consistent with their previous year's score.

Peer Assessment/Expert Opinion: US News surveys presidents, chief academic officers and deans of admissions who rank universities on a 1-5 scale. Loyola's peer assessment score this year (a category which represents 20% of the overall score) is 3.3, which ties last year's score. This remains the highest peer assessment score in history (the previous highest value was 3.2 in 2019). This peer assessment score is higher than 18 of the schools which are above Loyola in the overall rankings (including Santa Clara, LMU, Marquette, and Gonzaga); there are only two schools ranked below Loyola with a higher peer assessment score (University of Kansas and Rochester Institute of Technology), each with a score of 3.4.

Social Mobility Score: Recently US News has included a social mobility score (5% weight) in their rankings. The score is based on the graduation rates of students receiving Pell grants, and also by comparing the graduation rates of students receiving Pell grants to the graduation rates of non-Pell recipients. Even though the graduation rate of Pell students increased (70% compared to 67%), our ranking fell from 154th last year to 220th this year.

Graduation and Retention rate: Comprising 22% of the total scoring, US News uses a four year rolling average of the first to second year retention rate and six year graduation rate to calculate their graduation/retention rate rank. Our metrics in these areas increased slightly since last year, and our ranking in this area thus improved from 115th to 114th.

**Table 1
Loyola University Chicago Ten-Year Trend**

Category	Weight	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	1-Yr.	Change 10- Yr.
National Rank		106	101	106	99	99	103	89	104	112	103	9	3
Overall Total Score	100.0%	46	48	44	44	48	49	52	51	59	60	1	14
Expert Opinion	20.0%												
Peer Assessment Score	20.0%	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.2	3.3	3.3	0.0	0.4
HS Counselor Score	NA		3.9	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.8	3.9	----	----	----	----	----
Outcomes	40.0%												
Social Mobility	5.0%												
Pell Grant Graduation Rates	2.5%							75%	66%	67%	70%	3%	----
Pell Grant Grad Rates	2.5%							78%	77%	77%	78%	1%	----
Compared with all Other Students													
Graduation and Retention	22.0%												
Graduation/Retention Rank		106	101	99	99	100	102	74	112	115	114	1	-8
Freshmen Retention	4.4%	85%	86%	86%	86%	86%	85%	84%	84%	84%	85%	1%	0%
Predicted Graduation Rate		69%	70%	73%	71%	71%	71%	69%	70%	70%	72%	2%	3%
Actual Graduation Rate	17.6%	70%	70%	71%	73%	74%	75%	77%	74%	74%	76%	2%	6%
Over/Underperformance	8.0%	1.0	0.0	-2.0	2.0	3.0	4.0	8.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	0.0	3.0
Graduate Indebtedness	5.0%												
Graduate Indebtedness Rank	NA									213	228	-15	----
Graduate Indebtedness Average										\$23,710	\$23,181	\$529	----
Graduate Indebtedness Proportion	3.0%									61%	63%	-2%	----
Faculty Res./Compensation	20.0%												
Faculty Resources Rank		115	102	118	116	108	106	109	136	155	176	-21	-61
% of Classes < 20	NA	38%	39%	38%	39%	45%	42%	42%	38%	35%	32%	-3%	-6%
% of Classes > 50	8.0%	8%	7%	7%	7%	7%	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	0%	2%
Faculty Compensation	7.0%												
% Faculty with Terminal Degree	3.0%							93%	93%	92%	92%	0%	----
Student Faculty Ratio	1.0%	15/1	14/1	14/1	14/1	14/1	14/1	14/1	14/1	14/1	14/1	0	1
% Full-Time Faculty	1.0%	75%	74%	75%	74%	73%	77%	77%	75%	75%	74%	-1%	-1%
Student Excellence	7.0%	87	87	92	88	106	96	94	113	116	100	16	-13
Average ACT	5.0%	25-	25-	24-	25-	24-	24-	24-	25-	25-	25-		
Fresh Top 10% of HS Class	2.0%	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	30	30	31	0-1	0-2
Acceptance Rate	2.0%	32%	35%	37%	34%	34%	34%	37%	37%	35%	39%	4%	7%
Acceptance Rate	NA	55%	81%	91%	63%	71%	73%	71%	68%	67%	71%	-4%	-16%
Financial Resources	10.0%												
Financial Resources Rank		141	130	117	113	112	121	128	140	142	147	-5	-6
Alumni Giving	3.0%												
Alumni Giving Rank	NA	132	112	114	139	175	184	168	220	224	234	-10	-102
Alumni Giving Rate	3.0%	10%	12%	11%	9%	6%	6%	6%	6%	5%	5%	0%	-5%

Numbers in Red=Negative Trend

Numbers in Blue=Positive Trend

Numbers in Black=No Trend

Table 2
Loyola Percentile Rank Among National Universities, 2006-2021

Year of Ranking	Loyola Rank	Number of Schools	Percentile
2021	103	392	73.7
2020	112	389	71.2
2019	104	399	73.9
2018	89	301	70.4
2017	103	300	65.7
2016	99	298	66.8
2015	99	268	63.1
2014	106	268	60.4
2013	101	270	62.6
2012	106	270	60.7
2011	119	268	55.6
2010	117	260	55.0
2009	119	260	54.2
2008	116	260	55.4
2007	112	258	56.6
2006	112	248	54.8

Over/under performance (with respect to graduation rate): Based on the profile of each entering class, US News computes an “expected” six year graduation rate and compares the observed rate with the predicted rate. Loyola has routinely overperformed on this index in the last several years, graduating students at a rate four percentage points higher than predicted. This category accounts for 8% of the total score.

Graduate Indebtedness: US News ranks schools on the basis of the amount of indebtedness of their graduates and the proportion of students graduating with debt. Loyola’s ranking of graduate indebtedness overall was 213 last year and dropped to 228 this year. Although Loyola’s average indebtedness decreased from \$23,710 to \$23,181 compared to last year, the percentage of students graduating with debt increased from 61% to 63%.

Faculty resource rank: An area where Loyola’s scores decreased, faculty resources (20% of the weight) is based on class size (particularly how many classes have enrollments < 20 or > 50), faculty salary, percentage of faculty who hold the terminal degree in their field, student/faculty ratio, and proportion of faculty who are full time. Loyola’s rank in this area decreased to 176 from 155 last year and from 136 the prior year.

The financial resources rank (10% weight) decreased to 147 from 142; this parameter measures spending per student on instruction, research, student services, and related educational expenditures. Spending on sports, dorms, and hospitals is not included in this computation.

Student Excellence (formerly selectivity): Including SAT/ACT scores and percentage of students in the top 10% of their high school class (accounting for 7% weight), Loyola’s student excellence ranking increased to 100 from 116 last year. The 25th-75th percentile of ACT scores of Loyola’s incoming students last year was 25-30, whereas this year it was 25-31. This year, 39% of incoming freshmen were in the top 10% of their high school class (as opposed to 35% last year).

Alumni Giving: An area in which Loyola has always lagged, the percentage of our alumni who donated to the school is 5%, the same percentage as last year. Fortunately, the weight of this category is just 3%.

While the overall rankings dominate attention and discussion, US News produces other lists that are important to consider:

A+ Schools for B students: To qualify for this list, schools must be in the top ¾ of their ranking category and have the test scores and class rank of incoming students fall within certain ranges. They must also have an average first-year student retention rate of 75% or higher. This year, Loyola was included in the 114 national universities who qualified for this list, though this list is unranked.

Best Undergraduate Teaching: US News also asks a series of supplemental questions of presidents, chief academic officers and deans of admissions who are asked to nominate up to 15 schools in several categories. To be ranked in the best undergraduate teaching category, a school had to receive at least seven nominations. Of the 392 national universities, only 86 qualified for this accolade. Among this select group of universities, Loyola improved slightly this year from 49th to 48th.

Most Innovative Schools: For the first time last year, Loyola was included on the Most Innovative Schools list. As with the other special categories, schools needed to receive at least seven nominations to be included in this category. Last year, Loyola ranked 58th among the 83 schools that received sufficient nominations but this year did not receive sufficient nominations to be included.

Service Learning: One of the supplemental questions focused on schools with strong service learning programs. Only 25 schools received at least 10 nominations to be placed on this list. Out of 392 national universities, Loyola placed 14th in terms of the most nominations. This is an improvement from last year in when we placed 21st.

First-Year Experience: Another supplemental question was dedicated to the best first-year experience programs. Only 82 schools received at least 10 nominations to be included in this list. Of the 392 national universities, Loyola placed 64th in terms of most nominations.

Best Value Schools: To determine which colleges and universities offer the best value for students, U.S. News takes into account both quality and cost. Only schools ranked in the top half of their 2021-22 College ranking categories were considered for this list. Loyola ranked 95th on this list, a decrease from last year's rank of 81st.

Best Nursing Programs: This year US News published its first ever Undergraduate Bachelor of Science in Nursing rankings. US News identified 694 accredited programs and conducted a peer assessment survey with a committee consisting of deans and faculty members. Loyola's Nursing program ranked 31st out of the 694 schools (96th percentile).

Business School Rankings: US News also included rankings of undergraduate business schools as well as subfields within business. Based on ratings from deans and senior faculty members at peer institutions, Quinlan School of Business ranks 84th out of 514 undergraduate business schools, consistent with last year's rank of 81st out of 511. For subfield rankings, institutions needed to receive seven or more top-15 nominations from the aforementioned peers to be included on the lists. Loyola ranked 24th in marketing this year, a slight drop from last year's rank of 17th. Last year, Loyola also ranked 19th in management information systems, but was not on the list this year. However, last year Loyola was not ranked in accounting or supply chain management and this year made both lists. The accounting program ranked 31st and the supply chain management program ranked 22nd.

Top Schools for Veterans: For schools to be considered for the Best Colleges for Veterans list they had to meet several criteria. Among them, they have to be certified for the GI Bill, participate in the Yellow Ribbon Program, and enroll a certain number of veterans and active service members. Loyola did not enroll sufficient numbers of veterans and active service members in the 2020-21 year to be included in this ranking for this year.

The next set of tables shows how Loyola compares to our peer institutions across a variety of parameters. **Table 3** shows the ten year trend of data of national rankings. Note that some schools (e.g., Villanova and Santa Clara) do not present data for the full ten years; those schools were added to the national universities rankings during the past decade. Over half of the institutions in this table experienced a decrease in their ranking compared to last year.

Table 3
Loyola University Peer Group National Rankings

Peer Institution Name	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change	
											2012-21	2020-21
Tulane University	51	52	54	41	39	40	44	40	41	42	9	-1
Villanova					50	46	49	46	53	49	----	4
Santa Clara								54	53	55	----	-2
Fordham University	58	57	58	66	60	61	70	74	66	68	-10	-2
Loyola Marymount								64	66	75	----	-9
American University	77	75	71	72	74	69	78	77	76	79	-2	-3
Marquette University	83	75	76	86	86	90	89	84	88	83	0	5
University of Denver	83	91	88	86	86	87	96	97	80	93	-10	-13
Univ. of San Diego	92	91	95	89	86	90	85	91	88	93	-1	-5
Creighton University								104	112	103	----	9
Drexel	83	97	95	99	96	94	102	97	133	103	-20	30
Loyola University	106	101	106	99	99	103	89	104	112	103	3	9
Saint Louis University	92	101	99	96	96	94	106	97	103	103	-11	0
Univ. of San Francisco	106	117	106	108	107	110	96	97	103	103	3	0
Rochester Inst. Of Tech.					107	97	102	104	112	117	----	-5
Ill Institute of Tech.	113	109	116	108	103	103	96	117	124	122	-9	2
DePaul University	134	121	121	123	124	120	119	125	124	127	7	-3
University of Dayton	115	112	103	108	111	124	127	132	133	127	-12	6
Duquesne University	120	121	116	115	124	120	119	132	143	148	-28	-5
St. John's University	147	152	145	153	164	165	152	179	170	172	-25	-2

Numbers in Red=Negative Trend

Numbers in Blue=Positive Trend

Numbers in Black=No Trend

Note: '---' indicates institutions that were in different ranking categories in previous years.

Table 4 shows Loyola’s U.S. News Peer Group total score results for the past ten years. Notice that every school experienced a large increase between 2019 and 2020. This suggests that at least some (and likely a significant amount) of the increase was due to a change in the algorithm used by US News to compute total overall scores. This year, almost all institutions remained within one point of their overall score from last year.

Table 4
Peer Group Total Score

Peer Institution Name	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change	
											2012-21	2020-21
Tulane University	61	61	58	61	64	66	65	67	73	73	12	0
Villanova					62	64	63	65	69	70	----	1
Santa Clara								62	69	69	----	0
Fordham University	58	60	57	54	59	60	57	57	66	66	8	0
Loyola Marymount								59	66	65	----	-1
American University	52	53	52	51	54	57	55	56	64	64	12	0
Marquette University	51	53	50	47	51	52	52	54	62	63	12	1
University of Denver	51	50	48	47	51	53	51	52	63	62	11	-1
Univ. of San Diego	49	50	47	46	51	52	53	53	62	62	13	0
Creighton University								51	59	60	----	1
Drexel	51	49	47	44	49	51	50	52	56	60	9	4
Loyola University	46	48	44	44	48	49	52	51	59	60	14	1
Saint Louis University	49	48	46	45	49	51	49	52	60	60	11	0
Univ. of San Francisco	46	45	44	41	46	48	51	52	60	60	14	0
Rochester Inst. Of Tech.					46	50	50	51	59	59	----	0
Ill Institute of Tech.	45	47	42	41	47	49	51	50	57	58	13	1
DePaul University	40	43	41	38	43	46	47	48	57	57	17	0
University of Dayton	44	46	45	41	45	45	45	46	56	57	13	1
Duquesne University	43	43	42	40	43	46	47	46	55	55	12	0
St. John's University	38	37	35	31	35	37	40	40	52	53	15	1

Numbers in Red=Negative Trend

Numbers in Blue=Positive Trend

Numbers in Black=No Trend

Note: '---' indicates institutions that were in different ranking categories in previous years.

Table 5 shows Loyola’s U.S. News Peer Group Assessment score results for the past ten years. Loyola’s peer assessment score has increased by 0.4 across the past ten years, suggesting that our national reputation has been enhanced in recent years. Most peer institutions have remained steady in this metric from last year to this year.

**Table 5
Peer Assessment Score**

Peer Institution Name	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change	
											2012-21	2020-21
Tulane University	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.6	0.2	0.0
Rochester Inst. Of Tech.					3.3	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.4	---	-0.1
Villanova					3.2	3.2	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.4	---	0.0
American University	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.3	0.3	0.0
Fordham University	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.3	3.3	0.1	0.0
Loyola University	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.2	3.3	3.3	0.4	0.0
Marquette University	3.0	2.9	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.2	0.2	0.0
Santa Clara								3.1	3.2	3.2	---	0.0
Creighton								3.0	3.0	3.1	---	0.1
Loyola Marymount								3.1	3.1	3.1	---	0.0
Saint Louis University	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.1	0.2	0.0
University of Denver	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.1	0.3	0.0
Univ. of San Diego	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.1	0.3	0.0
Univ. of San Francisco	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.9	3.0	3.0	3.1	0.2	0.1
DePaul University	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.0	3.0	3.0	0.2	0.0
Drexel	N/A	2.9	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.0	---	-0.1
Ill Institute of Tech.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.9	0.2	0.0
St. John's University	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	0.2	0.1
University of Dayton	N/A	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.8	---	0.1
Duquesne University	2.7	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.7	0.0	-0.1

Numbers in Red=Negative Trend

Numbers in Blue=Positive Trend

Numbers in Black=No Trend

Note: ‘---’ indicates institutions that were in different ranking categories in previous years.

The peer assessment score comprises a substantial portion of the total weight – 20%. The assessment factor is based on the university’s perceived reputation. Loyola has little to no control over how others perceive its reputation. However, it is clearly a factor that can make a difference in determining Loyola’s overall rank.

Table 6 shows Loyola’s U.S. News Peer Group Graduation and Retention Rank results for the past ten years. This rank is based on a four year rolling average of retention and six year graduation rates. Our highest rank of 74 in 2018 was fueled by the highest graduation rate in our recent history. Our rank has remained relatively steady across the past three years at 112th, 115th, and 114th.

**Table 6
Graduation and Retention Rank**

Peer Institution Name	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change	
											2012-21	2020-21
Santa Clara								33	28	28	----	0
Villanova University					31	30	31	30	28	28	----	0
Tulane University	85	83	86	74	72	66	74	58	52	54	31	-2
Fordham University	63	65	67	70	68	70	85	78	73	75	-12	-2
Marquette University	62	59	67	70	60	73	93	78	81	75	-13	6
Loyola Marymount								73	81	84	----	-3
University of Dayton	78	77	79	80	80	83	112	92	92	84	-6	8
Univ. of San Diego	82	83	82	80	82	83	85	88	87	84	-2	3
American University	69	74	73	74	72	70	66	82	87	93	-24	-6
Creighton University								95	93	93	----	0
Saint Louis University	91	91	94	99	100	97	112	103	93	93	-2	0
Duquesne University	85	87	86	87	92	93	74	103	98	98	-13	0
University of Denver	75	77	79	80	89	90	112	98	98	106	-31	-8
Loyola University	106	101	99	99	100	102	74	112	115	114	-8	1
Drexel	119	118	114	117	125	125	136	127	131	121	-2	10
Ill Institute of Tech.	106	101	108	111	102	110	74	112	120	121	-15	-1
Univ. of San Francisco	98	101	103	106	113	110	104	122	115	121	-23	-6
DePaul University	119	114	108	106	106	104	95	127	131	130	-11	1
Rochester Inst. Of Tech.					130	127	122	137	136	130	----	6
St. John's University	155	163	166	165	177	180	155	209	209	204	-49	5

Numbers in Red=Negative Trend

Numbers in Blue=Positive Trend

Numbers in Black=No Trend

Note: ‘---’ indicates prior ranking in terms of Tiers with nor rank

Table 7 shows Loyola’s U.S. News Peer Group Student Excellence (formerly Selectivity) Rank results for the past ten years. This year, Loyola’s ranking increased from 116 to 100. Over half of our peer institutions experienced a decrease in this rank from last year to this year.

**Table 7
Student Excellence Rank**

Peer Institution Name	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change	
											2012-21	2020-21
Tulane University	42	61	76	45	42	37	34	33	32	37	5	-5
Villanova University					54	45	38	40	32	37	----	-5
Fordham University	69	64	69	72	71	67	66	70	69	70	-1	-1
Santa Clara								65	72	74	----	-2
American University	64	64	64	58	79	71	94	90	91	81	-17	10
Rochester Inst. Of Tech.					85	80	80	83	79	81	----	-2
Saint Louis University	78	77	71	69	74	76	71	74	85	81	-3	4
Ill Institute of Tech.	67	61	64	66	63	60	68	74	79	86	-19	-7
Marquette University	87	72	81	88	92	96	89	101	110	86	1	24
University of Denver	75	81	83	78	76	76	89	83	94	86	-11	8
Creighton University								101	98	91	----	7
Loyola Marymount								83	79	91	----	-12
Drexel	98	103	113	117	98	104	112	107	98	94	4	4
Loyola University	87	87	92	88	106	96	94	113	116	100	-13	16
Univ. of San Diego	69	72	71	72	85	80	80	95	94	100	-31	-6
Univ. of San Francisco	136	140	113	128	131	148	151	125	141	113	23	28
Duquesne University	136	137	142	137	151	140	130	143	154	172	-36	-18
St. John's University	213	172	165	164	198	199	177	190	167	185	28	-18
DePaul University	118	121	113	128	140	136	143	173	182	191	-73	-9
University of Dayton	118	94	107	100	106	172	177	198	211	224	-106	-13

Numbers in Red=Negative Trend

Numbers in Blue=Positive Trend

Numbers in Black=No Trend

Note: ‘---’ indicates prior ranking in terms of Tiers with nor rank

Table 8 below shows the 2020-21 and 2021-22 overall ranking results for AJCU members.

**Table 8
AJCU Peer Group**

Category/Institution	Year/Rank	Number of Institutions	Year/Rank	Number of Institutions
<u>National Universities</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>389</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>392</u>
Georgetown	23		23	
Boston College	35		36	
Santa Clara	53		55	
Fordham	66		68	
Loyola Marymount	66		75	
Gonzaga	80		79	
Marquette	88		83	
Creighton	112		103	
Loyola University Chicago	112		103	
Saint Louis	103		103	
University of San Francisco	103		103	
Seattle	124		127	
University of Detroit Mercy	187		187	
Loyola University New Orleans	196		202	
Regis	217		227	
<u>Regional Universities (Midwest)</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>156</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>157</u>
John Carrol	2		2	
Xavier	5		5	
Rockhurst	13		24	
<u>Regional Universities (North)</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>176</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>175</u>
Fairfield	3		3	
Loyola University Maryland	4		4	
University of Scranton	6		5	
St. Joseph's	8		8	
Le Moyne	17		13	
Canisius	19		21	
Saint Peters	75		58	
<u>Regional Universities (South)</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>133</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>138</u>
Wheeling	59		80	
<u>National Liberal Arts Colleges</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>221</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>223</u>
Holy Cross	36		35	
Spring Hill	Tier 2		Tier 2	

Table 9 shows additional ranking categories U.S. News uses to supplement the overall rankings. Loyola did well in a number of rankings specifically in the undergraduate business programs, nursing programs, and engineering programs. Loyola also performed especially well in the best first year experience, ranking 64th, and in the best service learning, ranking 14th.

Table 9
Undergraduate Rankings 2020-21 VS. 2021-22

Ranked Categories	2020-21			2021-22		
	LUC Rank	Total Number of Institutions	Percentile Rank	LUC Rank	Total Number of Institutions	Percentile Rank
National Universities Overall Rank	112	389	71.2	103	392	73.7
Best Online Bachelor’s Degree Program	8	345	97.7	21	357	94.1
Best Undergraduate Business Programs	81	511	84.1	84	514	83.7
Accounting	---	Top 69	---	31	Top 65	---
Finance	---	Top 39	---	---	Top 48	---
Marketing	17	Top 39	---	24	Top 42	---
MGMT Information Systems	19	Top 27	---	---	Top 26	---
Supply Chain Management	---	Top 24	---	22	Top 23	---
Most Debt	102	Top 125	---	101	Top 125	---
Best Undergraduate Nursing Programs	---	---	---	31	694	95.5
Best Value Schools	81	389	79.2	95	392	75.7
Campus Ethnic Diversity	120	360	66.7	103	362	71.5
Freshmen Retention Rate	160	389	58.9	144	391	63.2
Economic Diversity (% receiving Pell Grants)	228	374	39.0	259	379	31.7
Best First Year Experience Schools	---	---	---	64	Top 82	---
Most Students Receiving Merit Aid	---	---	---	72	Top 100	---
Best Undergraduate Teaching	49	389	87.4	48	392	87.7
Average Need-Based Financial Aid	---	---	---	69	338	79.6
Highest 4-Year Grad Rate (all Schools)	228	1208*	81.1	187	1160*	83.9
A+ Schools for B Students	112	284	60.6	Top 114	Top 114	---
Undergraduate Engineering Programs	---	---	---	39	239	83.7
Service Learning	21	389	94.6	14	392	96.4
Social Mobility	154	389	60.4	220	392	43.9
Top Schools for Veterans	76	389	80.5	---	---	---
Most Innovative Schools	58	Top 83	---	---	---	---

* Includes all schools -- National Universities, Liberal Arts Colleges, Regional Universities, Regional Colleges

APPENDICES

2021-22 U.S. News and World Report Rankings Results Factors and Weights 2021-22

RANKING FACTOR	NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES AND NATIONAL LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES INDICATOR WEIGHT	REGIONAL UNIVERSITIES AND REGIONAL COLLEGES INDICATOR WEIGHT
GRADUATION AND RETENTION RATES	22%	22%
AVERAGE SIX-YEAR GRADUATIONRATE	17.6%	17.6%
AVERAGE FIRST-YEAR STUDENTRETENTION RATE	4.4%	4.4%
SOCIAL MOBILITY	5%	5%
PELL GRANT GRADUATION RATES	2.5%	2.5%
PELL GRANT GRADUATION RATEPERFORMANCE	2.5%	2.5%
GRADUATION RATE PERFORMANCE	8%	8%

RANKING FACTOR	NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES AND NATIONAL LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES INDICATOR WEIGHT	REGIONAL UNIVERSITIES AND REGIONAL COLLEGES INDICATOR WEIGHT
UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC REPUTATION	20%	20%
PEER ASSESSMENT SURVEY	20%	20%
FACULTY RESOURCES FOR 2020-2021 ACADEMIC YEAR	20%	20%
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%
STUDENT SELECTIVITY FOR THE FALL 2020 ENTERING CLASS	7%	7%
MATH AND EVIDENCE-BASED READING AND WRITING PORTIONS OF THE SAT AND THE COMPOSITE ACT SCORES	5%	5%
HIGH SCHOOL CLASS STANDING IN TOP 10%	2%	0%
HIGH SCHOOL CLASS STANDING IN TOP 25%	0%	2%
ACCEPTANCE RATE	0%	0%
FINANCIAL RESOURCES PER STUDENT	10%	10%
AVERAGE ALUMNI GIVING RATE	3%	3%
GRADUATE INDEBTEDNESS	5%	5%
GRADUATE INDEBTEDNESS TOTAL	3%	3%
GRADUATE INDEBTEDNESS PROPORTION WITH DEBT	2%	2%
TOTAL	100%	100%

How U.S. News Calculated the 2022 Best Colleges Rankings

Here is a breakdown of what goes into the annual rankings.

By Robert Morse and Eric Brooks

Deciding where to apply for college is tough. But the U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges rankings, now in their 37th year, can help. Our latest edition assesses 1,466 U.S. bachelor's degree-granting institutions on 17 measures of academic quality. The comparisons are useful for crafting a shortlist of institutions to examine more closely and may also highlight new options.

To further explore the rankings and data, U.S. News' college profile pages benchmark each school's performance across ranking indicators and include the latest statistics used in the calculations – such as the student-faculty ratio and the average federal loan debt of graduates. We also list information schools reported directly to U.S. News on academic majors offered, application requirements, tuition and financial aid policies, student body demographics, and campus life. Colleges' individual profile pages have post-graduate earnings data by undergraduate focus as well as user ratings and reviews submitted by alumni.

In conjunction with the rankings and school profiles, the [usnews.com](https://www.usnews.com) search filter allows users to analyze schools with select characteristics. The My Fit College Search, a premium-level search accessible only to Compass subscribers, goes further by building customized rankings.

Taken together, the rankings, directory and search tools – combined with interviews, college visits, U.S. News' education journalism and your own intuition – can be powerful resources in your quest for the best fit college.

Background on This Year's Rankings

Although the methodology is the product of years of research, we continuously refine our approach based on user feedback, discussions with schools and higher education experts, literature reviews, trends in our own data, availability of new data, and engaging with deans and institutional researchers at higher education conferences. Our detailed methodology is transparent in part for use by schools and academics, but mostly because we believe prospective students will find our rankings more useful if they know what the rankings measure.

Only thoroughly vetted academic data from our surveys and reliable third-party sources are used to calculate each ranking factor. This means for better or for worse, we do not factor nonacademic elements like social life and athletics; we do not conduct unscientific straw polls for use in our computations; and schools' ranks are not manipulated to coddle business relationships.

U.S. News surveyed schools in the spring and summer of 2021. Some of this information published on our website – most notably tuition and fees – reflect the upcoming 2021-2022 academic year. However, the latest data available for the ranking calculations pertained to fall 2020 and earlier. Notably, SAT/ACT scores mostly reflect a test-taking period from 2019 to early 2020, before the effects of the coronavirus were felt in the United States. Nonetheless, to account for the disruption to higher education due to the ongoing pandemic, we slightly adjusted how we assessed SAT/ACT scores and made greater use of historic data for a few of the other ranking indicators, described below.

How Ranks Are Determined

We calculated 10 distinct overall rankings where colleges and universities were grouped by their academic missions. For each ranking, the sum of weighted, normalized values across 17 indicators of academic quality determine each school's overall score and, by extension, its overall rank.

The top performer(s) in each ranking displays an overall score of 100. Others' overall scores are on a 0- 99 scale reflecting the distance from their ranking's top-performing school(s). Those placing outside the top 75% display their ranking's bottom quartile range (e.g., No. 90-120) instead of their individual ranks (e.g., No. 102).

The Ranking Factors

The ranking factors and their corresponding weights are unchanged from the 2021 edition. There were some modifications in how they were calculated. For more granular descriptions of the ranking factors, see the Ranking Criteria and Weights article and the Morse Code: Inside the College Rankings blog.

Outcomes (40%)

Forty percent of a school's rank comes from outcomes. Among them, average graduation and retention rates combine to be the most heavily weighted factor in our rankings, at 22%, because degree completion is necessary to receive the full benefits of undergraduate study from employers and graduate schools. Other outcome measures are graduation rate performance (8%), social mobility (5%) and graduate indebtedness (5%).

Graduation and retention rates: This has two components.

- A four-year rolling average of the proportion of each entering class (fall 2011-2014) earning a degree in six years or less (17.6%).
- A four-year rolling average of the proportion of first-year entering students (fall 2016-fall 2019) who returned the following fall (4.4%).

Graduation rate performance: We compared each college's actual six-year graduation rate with what we predicted for its fall 2013 and 2014 entering class. The predicted rates were modeled from factors including admissions data, the proportion of undergraduates who were awarded Pell Grants, school financial resources, the proportion of federal financial aid recipients who are first-generation college students, and National Universities' math and science orientations. We divided each school's actual graduation rate by its predicted rate and took a two-year average of the quotients for use in the rankings.

Social mobility: This indicator measures how well schools graduated students who received federal Pell Grants. Students receiving these grants typically come from households whose family incomes are less than \$50,000 annually, with most money going to students with total family incomes below \$20,000. For the third consecutive year, U.S. News published a distinct social mobility ranking for all ranked schools. The social mobility ranking was computed by aggregating the two ranking factors assessing graduation rates of Pell-awarded students.

- **Pell Grant graduation rates** incorporate six-year graduation rates of Pell Grant students, adjusted to give much more credit to schools with larger Pell student

proportions. This is computed as a two-year rolling average.

- **Pell Grant graduation rate performance** compares each school's six-year graduation rate among Pell recipients with its six-year graduation rate among non-Pell recipients by dividing the former into the latter, then adjusting to give much more credit to schools with larger Pell student proportions. The higher a school's Pell graduation rate relative to its non-Pell graduation rate up to the rates being equal, the better it scores. This, too, is computed as a two-year rolling average.

For the second consecutive year, two graduate indebtedness figures are included in the rankings based on data collected by U.S. News during the spring and summer of 2020 and 2021 on our financial aid survey. The two indicators are:

Graduate indebtedness: Affordability of college and the value of that degree after graduation – in terms of being able to earn enough money to make the loan payments – are prime concerns of prospective students and their families. Consequently, we assessed two measures of graduate indebtedness totaling 5% of each school's overall score.

The **graduate indebtedness total** ranking factor (weighted 3%) assesses each school's average accumulated federal loan debt among its 2019 and 2020 bachelor's degree graduating classes by comparing it to the median debt amount among ranked schools

Graduate indebtedness proportion (weighted 2%) is the percentage of graduates from the 2019 and 2020 bachelor's degree graduating classes who borrowed federal loans. This ranking factor credits schools for meeting the full financial need without loans of their undergraduates (who would not be included in the graduate indebtedness total cohort) by comparing the proportions who borrowed to the median proportion among ranked schools.

Both the graduate indebtedness total and graduate indebtedness proportion ranking factors incorporate federal loans made to students who borrowed while enrolled at the institutions and co-signed loans.

They exclude students who transferred in, money borrowed at other institutions, parent loans and students who did not graduate with a bachelor's degree.

New for the 2022 edition, we averaged schools' scores from the 2021 and 2020 rankings to mitigate year-to-year volatility.

Faculty Resources (20%)

Research shows the greater access students have to quality instructors, the more engaged they will be in class and the more they will learn and be satisfied with their instructors. U.S. News uses five factors from the 2020-2021 academic year to assess a school's commitment to instruction: class size (8%), faculty salary (7%), faculty with the highest degree in their fields (3%), student-faculty ratio (1%) and proportion of faculty who are full time (1%).

- At 8%, class size is the most heavily weighted faculty resource measure. Schools score better with greater proportions of smaller classes for fall 2020. Schools have always been instructed to exclude classes taught fully online from this reporting, but pertaining to fall 2020 were instructed to include classes designed for in-person instruction, even if they were temporarily taught online because of the coronavirus. To downweight the influence of an irregular year due to the pandemic, schools' scores on the fall 2020 data were averaged against their scores

from fall 2019 data – the first time U.S. News scored this ranking factor using a two-year average.

- Faculty salary is weighted at 7% and includes the average full-time faculty salaries for assistant, associate and full-time professors for 2020-2021, based on definitions from the American Association of University Professors. Salary data was once again adjusted for regional differences in the cost of living using the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis regional price parities indexes and was based on regional prices indexes published in December 2020. We returned to calculating average faculty salary as a two-year average because this is the second rankings edition to use the latest AAUP definitions during data collection.

Expert Opinion (20%)

Academic reputation matters because it factors things that cannot easily be captured elsewhere. For example, an institution known for having innovative approaches to teaching may perform especially well on this indicator, whereas a school struggling to keep its accreditation will likely perform poorly.

Each year, top academics – presidents, provosts and deans of admissions – rate the academic quality of peer institutions with which they are familiar on a scale of 1 (marginal) to 5 (distinguished). We take a two-year weighted average of the ratings. The 2022 Best Colleges rankings factor in scores from both 2021 and 2020.

A change from the previous edition, the very small proportion of schools that received fewer than 10 cumulative ratings (exclusively regional colleges in the 2022 edition) receive assigned values equaling the lowest average score among schools that received at least 10 ratings.

U.S. News collected the most recent data by administering peer assessment surveys to schools in spring and summer 2021. Of the 4,741 academics who were sent questionnaires on the overall rankings in 2021, 34.1% responded – just shy of the 36.4% response rate in 2020.

Schools interested in a breakdown of their peer assessment ratings by respondent type and region can access this information, along with 29 million other data points, with a subscription to U.S. News' Academic Insights. This web-based platform facilitates a deep dive for studying and benchmarking the rankings and is designed for colleges and universities only.

Financial Resources (10%)

Generous per-student spending indicates a college can offer a variety of programs and services. U.S. News measures financial resources by using the average spending per student on instruction, research, student services and related educational expenditures in the 2019 and 2020 fiscal years. Expenditures were compared with fall 2018 and fall 2019 full-time and part-time undergraduate and graduate enrollment, respectively.

Student Excellence (7%)

Selective admissions enables talented, hard-working students to share a learning environment with their academic peers and enables instructors to design rigorous classes.

Standardized tests: U.S. News factors average test scores for all enrollees who took the mathematics and evidence-based reading and writing portions of the SAT and the composite ACT in fall 2020. Both SATs and ACTs were converted to their 0-100 test taker percentile distributions and

weighted based on the proportions of new entrants submitting each exam. For example, if a school had two-thirds of its test takers submitting ACT scores and one-third submitting SAT scores, its ACT scores would weigh twice as heavily as its SAT scores toward this ranking factor.

We weighted standardized tests at 5% in the overall rankings.

Schools sometimes fail to report SAT and ACT scores for students in these categories: athletes, international students, minority students, legacies, those admitted by special arrangement and those who started in the summer term. For any school that did not report all scores or that declined to say whether all scores were reported, U.S. News reduced its combined SAT/ACT percentile distribution value used in the ranking model by 15%.

A change for the 2022 edition – if the combined percentage of the fall 2020 entering class submitting test scores was less than 50% of all new entrants, its combined SAT/ACT percentile distribution value used in the rankings was discounted by 15%. In previous editions, the threshold was 75% of new entrants. The change was made to reflect the growth of test-optional policies through the 2019 calendar year and the fact that the coronavirus impacted the fall 2020 admission process at many schools.

U.S. News again ranks "test blind" schools, for which data on SAT and ACT scores were not available, by assigning them a rankings value equal to the lowest test score in their rankings. These schools differ from ones with test-optional or test-flexible admissions for which SAT and ACT scores were available and were always rank eligible.

High school class standing: U.S. News incorporates the proportion of enrolled first-year students at National Universities and National Liberal Arts Colleges who graduated in the top 10% of their high school classes, and for Regional Universities and Regional Colleges, the proportion who graduated in the top quarter of their high school classes. This contributes 2% toward schools' overall scores.

Alumni Giving (3%)

This is the average percentage of living alumni with bachelor's degrees who gave to their school during 2018-2019 and 2019-2020. Giving measures student satisfaction and post-graduate engagement.

Grouping Ranked Colleges

To make valid comparisons, we group schools by academic mission into 10 distinct rankings.

- National Universities offer a range of undergraduate majors, plus master's and doctoral programs, and emphasize faculty research or award professional practice doctorates.
- National Liberal Arts Colleges focus almost exclusively on undergraduate education and award at least 50% of their degrees in the arts and sciences.
- Regional Universities offer a broad scope of undergraduate degrees and some master's degree programs but few, if any, doctoral programs. We ranked them in four geographical groups: North, South, Midwest and West.
- Regional Colleges focus on undergraduate education but grant fewer than 50% of their degrees in liberal arts disciplines. Some regional colleges award two-year associate degrees as well as bachelor's degrees. We ranked them in four geographical groups: North, South,

Midwest and West.

To place each school in its ranking, U.S. News strictly mapped its categories to The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education's Basic Classification system, using its 2018 update for the third consecutive year. The U.S. Department of Education and many higher education associations use the Carnegie system to organize and label their data, among other uses. In short, the Carnegie categories are the accepted standard in U.S. higher education. That is why U.S. News has been using them since the first Best Colleges rankings were published in 1983.

Data Sources

U.S. News collects data directly from schools to have the most recent information available and to obtain critical information not available from third party sources. This year, 85% of ranked institutions returned their statistical information in the spring and summer of 2021.

For quality assurance, data schools reported to U.S. News was algorithmically compared with their previous years' submissions to detect possible inaccuracies. Respondents were required to review, possibly revise and verify any flagged data before they could submit their surveys. They were also instructed to have a top academic official sign off on the accuracy of the data. Schools that declined this last step could still be ranked, but display a footnote on their U.S. News profile on usnews.com.

After submitting, U.S. News assessed the veracity of data submitted on a factor-by-factor level and contacted select schools to confirm or revise data. This process compared schools' data with third party data when available, submissions from other ranked schools and the schools' own previous submissions. Schools that did not respond or were unable to confirm their data's accuracy may have had the data in question unpublished and unused in the calculations.

For schools that left blank questions pertaining to individual ranking factors or who refused to participate altogether, we obtained substitute data from the U.S. Department of Education's College Scorecard and its National Center for Education Statistics (finances, faculty counts, student-teacher ratios, faculty salaries, SAT and ACT scores, Pell and non-Pell graduation rates, and overall graduation and first-year retention rates). Altogether, ranking indicators that constitute approximately 85% of each schools' overall score may use third-party data when survey data was not reported. When substitute data was not available, schools received assigned values that are lower than most schools' actual values. As always, schools incur no explicit penalty in the rankings for not submitting their data to U.S. News, but often benefit by being scored on their complete, most recent data.

Schools that refused to fill out the U.S. News survey altogether display a footnote on their profiles as nonresponders. Missing data is reported as "N/A" on usnews.com, which only means that those specific data points were missing. N/A does not necessarily equate to how a school was scored on the ranking factor or whether the school received an assigned value or was scored on historical data. U.S. News doesn't publish estimates if they were used for schools with missing ranking indicator values.

In total, U.S. News has collected data on more than 1,850 institutions. While data for all schools appear on usnews.com, 1,466 schools were ranked.

Unranked Schools

In total, 404 colleges are listed as unranked; of these, 116 are in the Carnegie categories that are used

in the main overall Best Colleges rankings. The unranked designation owes to one of the following reasons:

- They are in a Carnegie Classification that U.S. News has not included in its ranking categories. These include, but are not limited to, 288 highly specialized schools in arts, business, engineering, health, medicine and technology.
- A six-year graduation rate of bachelor's degree students could not be found; this was most common with schools that enrolled very few full-time, first-year students and among new institutions.
- The institution's total undergraduate and graduate enrollment is fewer than 200 students.
- Following communication between U.S. News and a school about its data, a formerly ranked school can become unranked.

In previous editions, schools needed at least 10 cumulative ratings from the peer assessment indicator to be ranked. That requirement was discontinued because these schools now receive an assigned value in the rankings. This change resulted only in about a dozen more schools ranked in the 2022 edition versus the 2021 edition.

Different from schools that are listed on usnews.com as unranked, some U.S. schools that award bachelor's degrees are excluded from the Best Colleges directory altogether. These schools either didn't have regional accreditation, are graduate schools that have not recently enrolled any first-year students, or only offer distance education, according to 2020 data from the federal government. However, some institutions in the latter two groups were ranked and listed separately in January 2021 as part of U.S. News's Best Online Bachelor's Programs ranking.

Other College Rankings

U.S. News published undergraduate nursing program rankings for the first time this year. They were produced using data from a specialized nursing peer assessment survey administered in the spring and summer of 2021. A partial list of other rankings includes:

- U.S. News once again published discipline-specific undergraduate rankings in computerscience, engineering and business.
- The Best Value Schools rankings incorporate the overall ranking, but also credit schools for the amount of financial support made available to students with need.
- Prospective students interested in schools designated by the federal government as historically Black colleges and universities can review the 2022 edition of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities rankings.
- Veterans and active service members interested in strong academic schools that take advantage of Yellow Ribbon financial aid benefits may want to review the Best Colleges for Veterans rankings.
- A-Plus Schools for B Students is a listing of well-ranked schools that often enroll students without immaculate high school transcripts.

More to Come ...

Check out usnews.com throughout the year as we may get new information and add to the Best Colleges rankings. And as you mine these tables for insights – where you might win some merit aid, for example, or where you will be apt to get the most attention from professors – keep in mind that they provide a launching pad, not an easy answer.