

US News College Rankings for 2009

Harvard tops this year's list of America's Best Colleges in US News & World Report's College Rankings for 2009.

Harvard was joined by its traditional counterparts who usually place in the Top 3: Princeton and Yale. Let's take a look at this year's rankings of America's Top 10 Colleges. Most of these Colleges are also some of the hardest schools to get into.

1. Harvard

The US News & World Report gave Harvard a perfect score of 100 on their annual rankings of the best colleges. Harvard scored high in graduation and retention rates, graduating 97% of its 2007 class, the highest of all Universities in the US News' college rankings. Harvard is one of the hardest colleges to get into, as its acceptance rate in '07 was the lowest of all colleges in the rankings at 9%, and even lower for the most recent accepted class of 2012 at 7.1%!

2. Princeton

Princeton comes in ranked at a close 2nd, with an overall score of 99. Princeton boasts an astonishing student to faculty ratio of 5 to 1. They are also a very selective school, only admitting about 10% of its applicants. Princeton scored the highest among alumni giving, with a rate of 60%. Perhaps this is one of the reasons the school is known to provide its students with some of the best financial aid packages.

3. Yale

With the highest retention rate in the rankings with a rate 99%, Yale ranks third on US News' list of Best National Universities with an overall score of 98. Yale reported a record low 8.3% acceptance rate for the class of 2012.

4. MIT

MIT, friendly rival of fellow Cambridge school Harvard, is ranked the 4th best overall college along with Stanford. MIT moved up three spots in this years rankings, after they ranked 7th in the 2008 rankings.

4. Stanford

Stanford, with one of the largest campuses in the nation, only admitted 10.8% of 22,223 applicants in 2006, marking the lowest rate in Stanford history. This number was later trumped by this most recent group of applicants, where the class of 2012's acceptance rate was just 9.5 percent, the lowest admission rate in Stanford's 117-year history.

6. California Institute of Technology

Cal Tech has the lowest student to faculty ratios of all schools with a 3 to 1 ratio. It is a pretty small school though, with just over 2000 students. It won't be easy to get into this school, as it ranked high in selectivity, mainly due to its SAT/ACT 25-75th percentile of 1470-1580.

6. University of Pennsylvania

Penn is the only Ivy League school to report an increase in its acceptance rate for its most recent incoming class (from 16 to 16.4%), making it the only Ivy League school this year that has not reported a record low acceptance rate. Penn's business school, Wharton, was also named the nation's best business school program for 2009 by the US News and World Report.

8. Columbia University

What made Columbia stand out from other colleges in US News' rankings is its smaller class sizes; 76% of its classes have 20 students or fewer. Columbia's acceptance rate also reached record lows for its most recent admitted class

(8.7%).

8. Duke University

Duke once again makes US News' Top 10 Colleges, maintaining its ranking as the 8th best College in the nation.

8. University of Chicago

Of all the Colleges on the list of 2009's 10 best colleges, the University of Chicago has the highest acceptance rate among applicants at 35%, compared to many of the other schools here that range between 10%-17%.

Other highlights from US News' 2009 College Rankings:

Top Public Universities

1. University of California – Berkeley
2. University of Virginia
3. UCLA
4. University of Michigan
5. University of North Carolina
6. William and Mary
7. Georgia Tech
7. University of California – San Diego
7. University of Wisconsin
10. University of Illinois

Best Liberal Arts Colleges

1. Amherst College
1. Williams College
3. Swarthmore College
4. Wellesley College
5. Middlebury College

With the 2009 edition of US News' College rankings comes two newly created categories: Up-and-Coming Schools and High School Counselor Picks.

Up-and-Coming National Universities

1. George Mason University
2. Clemson University
3. University of Southern California
4. Arizona State University
5. University of Maryland - Baltimore County

High School Counselor Picks – National Universities

1. Harvard
- MIT
- Princeton
- Yale
5. Brown

Columbia
Cornell
Stanford

Methodology

Among the many factors used in determining US News & World Report's rankings of National Universities are:

- Peer assessment – 25%
- Graduation and retention rates – 20%
- Faculty resources – 20%
- Student selectivity – 15%
- Financial resources – 10%
- Alumni giving – 5%
- Graduation rate performance – 5%

Highlights of the US News and World Report's college rankings are scheduled for publication in the September 1-8 edition of U.S. News & World Report magazine, which will be available for newsstand purchase on August 25. Their America's Best Colleges guidebook goes on sale Tuesday, August 26.

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