

# U.S. News & World Report 2020 Best Colleges Rankings

## Office of Institutional Research and Assessment Summary Report

U.S. News and World Report releases the Best Colleges Rankings each fall. These undergraduate rankings are used by students to help them decide where to apply to college. Rankings are based on criteria such as retention and graduation rates, peer assessments, student selectivity, as well as faculty and financial resources. Rankings serve a purpose, but only measure a small portion of what we use as an institution to measure our success. The university is coming off a record year in undergraduate enrollment and has also seen sustained growth in our graduation rates.

This report presents the 2020 U.S. News Best Colleges Rankings for the University of Tennessee - Knoxville and our peers. Detailed peer rankings and rankings methodology are presented in the appendices.

<b>The University of Tennessee - Knoxville</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>Overall Rankings</b>			
<i>National Universities</i>	103	115	104
<i>Public School</i>	46	52	44
<b>Institutional Scores/Rankings</b>			
<i>Overall Score</i>	49	48	51
<i>Expert Opinion</i>	3.2	3.2	3.3
<i>Outcomes Rank</i>	-	-	170*
<i>Graduation and Retention Rank</i>	120	124	137
<i>Six-year graduation rate</i>	69%	70%	71%
<i>Average freshmen retention rate</i>	86%	86%	86%
<i>Over/Under Predicted graduation rate</i>	-2	-3	-3
<i>Social Mobility Rank</i>	-	-	138*
<i>Faculty Resources Rank</i>	124	123	169
<i>Faculty Compensation Rank</i>	-	-	55*
<i>Proportion of classes fewer than 20 students</i>	30.0%	30.0%	30%
<i>Proportion of classes with 50+ students</i>	13.0%	14.0%	15%
<i>Student Excellence Rank</i>	84	112	83
<i>SAT/ACT 25<sup>th</sup>-75<sup>th</sup> percentile</i>	24-30	24-30	25-31
<i>Freshmen in top 10% HS Class</i>	54%	n/a	36%
<i>Financial Resources Rank</i>	84	97	110
<i>Alumni Giving Rank</i>	102	105	108
<i>Average alumni giving rate</i>	10.4%	10.5%	10.7%

\*New categories

## The University of Tennessee - Knoxville

In the 2020 rankings, the University of Tennessee – Knoxville (UTK) rose 11 spots to #104 in the national rankings. We also increased 8 spots to #44 in the public school rankings. In the national rankings UTK is tied with thirteen other institutions and with eight in the public ranking.

Our undergraduate business program ranked 50th nationally (up 12 places) and 31st among publics (up 8 places). The supply chain/logistics program is ranked 7<sup>th</sup> nationally and its marketing program ranks 21st among public schools and 37th nationally. Undergraduate engineering is ranked 66th nationally (down 7 places) and 37<sup>th</sup> among publics (down 4).

U.S. News made several changes in their methodology this year:

- Outcomes Rank is a new ranking this year. It is based on the Graduation and Retention and the Social Mobility sub-rankings, and the graduation rate performance measure.
  - They added a variable to the graduation rate performance (predicted) calculation: proportion of federal financial aid recipients who are first generation.
  - US News also gave an actual Social Mobility sub-ranking. This was a new measure last year, of the school's success at promoting social mobility by graduating students who received Pell Grants. This year's ranking was based on 2 cohort's average (2011 and 2012 cohorts).
- The faculty salary figures were adjusted using open source data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis regional price parities 2017 dataset published in May 2018. They are expressed as a percentage of the overall national price level.
- This year they dropped the high school counselor rankings from the Expert Opinion category.

UTK significantly improved in the Student Excellence rank, moving up from 112 to 83. Even though UTK saw an increase, the majority of our peers saw a decrease in their Student Excellence rank. We also improved in the Expert Opinion rank and continue to improve our six year graduation rate.

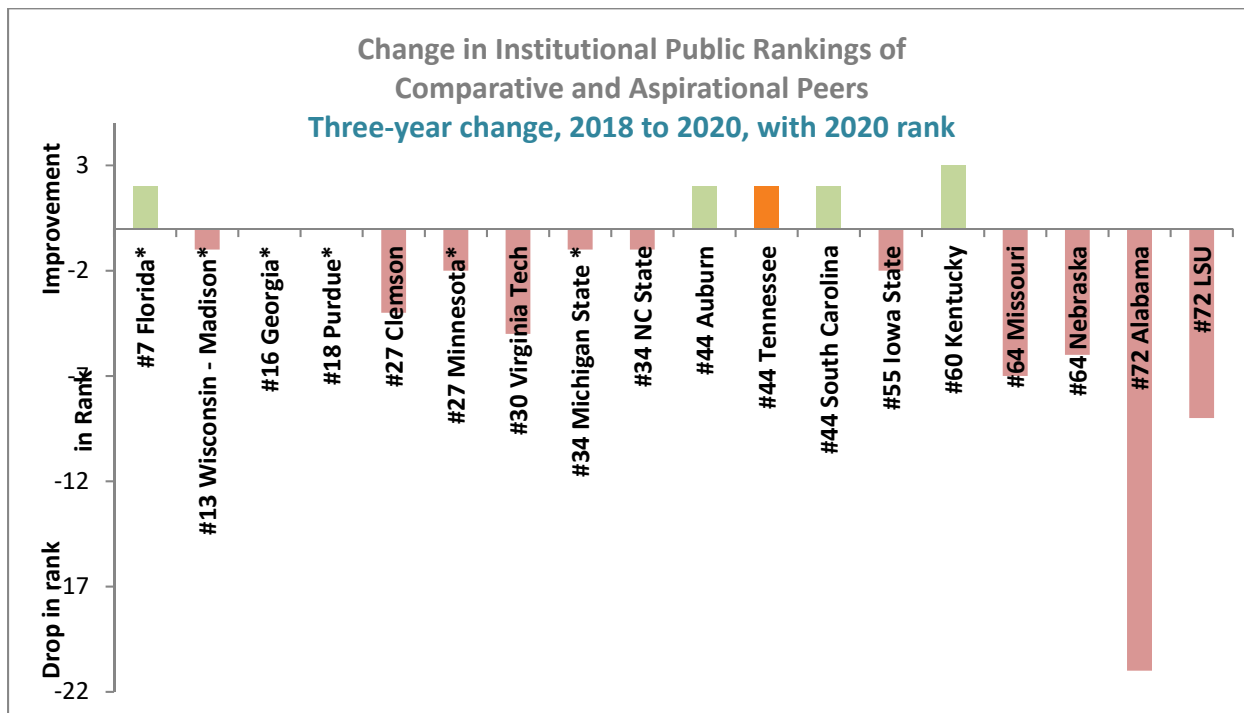
Among our comparable peers, 9 saw a decrease in the national rankings and 8 decreased in the public school rankings from 2019 to 2020. UTK saw decrease in our graduation and retention rank. For the 2012 cohort, UTK had a higher percentage of Pell recipients (30%) than all of our peers with the exception of one aspirational peer with whom we tied. Our differential six year grad rate between Pell recipients and non-recipients was smaller than all but four of our comparable peers.

All of our peers but two experienced a drop in the Faculty Resources rank. This seems to be mostly due to the changes in methodology for this rank. Our Alumni Giving rank also decreased slightly even though the actual Alumni Giving Rate slightly increased.

The University of Tennessee – Knoxville

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Overall Rankings</b>					
<i>National Universities</i>	103	103	103	115	104
<i>Public School</i>	47	46	46	52	44
<b>Institutional Scores/Rankings</b>					
<i>Overall Score</i>	42	47	49	48	51
<i>Expert Opinion</i>	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.3
<i>Outcomes Rank</i>	-	-	-	-	170
<i>Graduation and Retention Rank</i>	127	122	120	124	137
<i>Social Mobility Rank</i>	-	-	-	-	138
<i>Faculty Resources Rank</i>	135	137	124	123	169
<i>Student Excellence Rank</i>	82	79	84	112	83
<i>Financial Resources Rank</i>	56	72	84	97	110
<i>Alumni Giving Rank</i>	127	115	102	105	108

The following chart shows the changes in institution rankings of our comparative and aspirational peers over a three year period, from 2018 to 2020. Over this period, 4 peers (as well as UTK) have increased their public ranking and 11 peers have decreased.



\* Aspirational Peer

## Peer Comparisons

The University of Tennessee – Knoxville has two sets of comparison peers: Comparative (11) and Aspirational (6). From 2019 to 2020, we rose 8 places in the public rankings to 44<sup>th</sup>, while one of our comparative peers over the same 2 year period dropped 11 places. Four comparative and four aspirational peers rose in the public rankings and six comparative and two aspirational peers fell during this time period with one comparative peer maintaining their previous rank. In the following section, we list the schools that exhibited a large increase or decrease in the different categories.

### Comparative Peers

- National Universities ranking
  - Increased in rank: University of Kentucky (15), UTK (11), Auburn University (11)
  - Decreased in rank: University of Alabama (-24), Louisiana State (-13), University of Missouri (-10), and University of Nebraska (-10)
- Public Universities ranking
  - Increased in rank: University of Kentucky (15), UTK (8), and Auburn University (8)
  - Decreased in rank: University of Alabama (-11)
- Outcomes Rank
  - Increased in rank: No increases
  - Decreased in rank: University of Alabama (-48), University of Missouri (-46), UTK (-46), University of Kentucky (-42), Clemson University (-40), Louisiana State (-38), University of Nebraska (-37), North Carolina State (-15), Auburn University (-14), and Iowa State (-12)
- Faculty Resources Rank
  - Increased in Rank: University of Kentucky (14)
  - Decreased in rank: University of Alabama (-97), University of Nebraska (-88), University of Missouri (-52), North Carolina State (-50), UTK (-46), Auburn University (-38), Louisiana State (-38), University of South Carolina (-38), Virginia Tech (-35), and Iowa State (-25)
- Student Excellence Rank:
  - Increased in Rank: UTK (29) and University of South Carolina (8)
  - Decreased in rank: Iowa State (-13), University of Alabama (-13), University of Missouri (-13), Louisiana State (-12), Clemson University (-8), and University of Nebraska (-8)
- Financial Resources Rank:
  - Increased in Rank: Auburn University (26)
  - Decreased in rank: Iowa State (-25), University of Alabama (-25), University of South Carolina (-19), and University of Missouri (-16)

## Aspirational Peers

- National Universities ranking
  - Increased in rank: UTK (11) and University of Minnesota (6)
  - Decreased in rank: University of Georgia (-4)
- Public Universities ranking
  - Increased in rank: UTK (8) and University of Minnesota (3)
  - Decreased in rank: University of Georgia (-3)
- Outcomes Rank
  - Increased in rank: University of Georgia (16) and Michigan State University (13)
  - Decreased in rank: UTK (-46) and University of Minnesota (-26)
- Faculty Resources Rank
  - Increased in Rank: No increases
  - Decreased in rank: University of Minnesota (-54), UTK (-46), Michigan State University (-45), University of Georgia (-22), Purdue University (-16), University of Wisconsin - Madison (-16) and University of Florida (-12)
- Student Excellence Rank:
  - Increased in Rank: UTK (29)
  - Decreased in rank: Michigan State University (-20) and University of Florida (-8)
- Financial Resources Rank:
  - Increased in Rank: Michigan State University (16)
  - Decreased in rank: UTK (-13) and Purdue University (-5)

## SEC

- National Universities ranking
  - Increased in rank: University of Kentucky (15) Auburn University (11), and UTK (11)
  - Decreased in rank: Mississippi State (-34), University of Alabama (-24), Louisiana State (-13), University of Mississippi (-10), and University of Missouri (-10)
- Public Universities ranking
  - Increased in rank: University of Kentucky (15) Auburn University (8), UTK (8), and University of Arkansas (6)
  - Decreased in rank: University of Alabama (-11)
- Outcomes Rank
  - Increased in rank: University of Georgia (16)
  - Decreased in rank: Mississippi State (-85), University of Alabama (-48), University of Mississippi (-46), University of Missouri (-46), UTK (-46), University of Arkansas (-42), University of Kentucky (-42), Louisiana State (-38), and Vanderbilt (-21)

- Faculty Resources Rank
  - Increased in Rank: University of Kentucky (14)
  - Decreased in rank: Texas A&M (-117), University of Alabama (-97), University of Arkansas (-77), Mississippi State (-73), University of Missouri (-52), UTK (-46), Auburn University (-38), Louisiana State (-38), University of South Carolina (-38), University of Mississippi (-37), and University of Georgia (-22)
- Student Excellence Rank:
  - Increased in Rank: UTK (29), Mississippi State (18), and University of South Carolina (8)
  - Decreased in rank: University of Mississippi (-24), University of Alabama (-13), University of Missouri (-13), and Louisiana State (-12)
- Financial Resources Rank:
  - Increased in Rank: Auburn University (26)
  - Decreased in rank: University of Missouri (-42), University of Alabama (-25), Mississippi State (-22), University of South Carolina (-19), University of Arkansas (-17), Louisiana State (-15), Texas A&M (-15), and UTK (-13)

In the 2020 national rankings the University of Tennessee – Knoxville tied with thirteen other universities. The following public institutions tied with UTK: Auburn University (again), Temple University, University of California—Merced, University of Colorado—Boulder, University of Oregon, University of South Carolina, University of South Florida and University of Utah.

# **U.S. News & World Report 2020 Best Colleges Rankings**

## **Appendix A: UTK and Peer Comparison Tables**

USNWR Best Colleges Rankings  
2019-2020 Comparison

UTK Peers	2020 National Universities	2019 National Universities	Change	2020 Public Schools	2019 Public Schools	Change	2020 Expert Opinion	2019 Expert Opinion	Change
<i>University of Tennessee - Knoxville</i>	104	115	11	44	52	8	3.3	3.2	0.1
<b>Comparable Peers</b>									
Auburn University	104	115	11	44	52	8	3.3	3.3	0
Clemson University	70	66	-4	27	24	-3	3.4	3.3	0.1
Iowa State University	121	119	-2	55	56	1	3.3	3.3	0
Louisiana State University	153	140	-13	72	70	-2	2.9	2.9	0
North Carolina State University - Raleigh	84	80	-4	34	32	-2	3.2	3.2	0
University of Alabama	153	129	-24	72	61	-11	3.1	3.2	-0.1
University of Kentucky	132	147	15	60	75	15	3.2	3.1	0.1
University of Missouri	139	129	-10	64	61	-3	3.2	3.2	0
University of Nebraska	139	129	-10	64	61	-3	3.2	3.1	0.1
University of South Carolina	104	106	2	44	46	2	3.2	3.1	0.1
Virginia Tech	74	76	2	30	30	0	3.7	3.5	0.2
<b>Aspirational Peers</b>									
Michigan State University	84	85	1	34	35	1	3.5	3.5	0
Purdue University	57	56	-1	18	17	-1	3.8	3.8	0
University of Georgia	50	46	-4	16	13	-3	3.6	3.6	0
University of Florida	34	35	1	7	8	1	3.8	3.7	0.1
University of Minnesota	70	76	6	27	30	3	3.7	3.7	0
University of Wisconsin - Madison	46	49	3	13	15	2	4.1	4.0	0.1



USNWR Best Colleges Rankings  
2019-2020 Comparison

UTK Peers		2020 Outcomes Rank (New)	2019 Outcomes Rank (N/A)	Change	2020 Graduation and Retention Rank	2019 Graduation and Retention Rank	Change	2020 Social Mobility Rank (New)	2019 Social Mobility Rank (N/A)	Change
<i>University of Tennessee - Knoxville</i>		170	-	-	137	124	-13	105	-	-
<b>Comparable Peers</b>										
Auburn University		144	-	-	98	130	32	380	-	-
Clemson University		114	-	-	64	74	10	348	-	-
Iowa State University		136	-	-	112	124	12	270	-	-
Louisiana State University		208	-	-	167	170	3	345	-	-
North Carolina State University - Raleigh		89	-	-	78	74	-4	224	-	-
University of Alabama		214	-	-	141	166	25	377	-	-
University of Kentucky		234	-	-	182	192	10	345	-	-
University of Missouri		201	-	-	145	155	10	354	-	-
University of Nebraska		201	-	-	154	164	10	303	-	-
University of South Carolina		133	-	-	107	124	17	322	-	-
Virginia Tech		72	-	-	52	66	14	322	-	-
<b>Aspirational Peers</b>										
Michigan State University		61	-	-	82	74	-8	241	-	-
Purdue University		100	-	-	88	95	7	270	-	-
University of Georgia		26	-	-	46	42	-4	159	-	-
University of Florida		4	-	-	33	7	-26	34	-	-
University of Minnesota		100	-	-	82	74	-8	251	-	-
University of Wisconsin - Madison		61	-	-	40	55	15	297	-	-

USNWR Best Colleges Rankings  
2019-2020 Comparison

UTK Peers		2020 Faculty Resources Rank	2019 Faculty Resources Rank	Change	2020 Faculty Compensation Rank (New)	2019 Faculty Compensation Rank (N/A)	Change	2020 Student Excellence Rank	2019 Student Excellence Rank	Change
<i>University of Tennessee - Knoxville</i>		169	123	-46	55	-	-	83	112	29
<b>Comparable Peers</b>										
Auburn University		182	144	-38	70	-	-	90	94	4
Clemson University		95	95	0	70	-	-	65	57	-8
Iowa State University		227	202	-25	83	-	-	152	139	-13
Louisiana State University		182	144	-38	83	-	-	134	122	-12
North Carolina State University - Raleigh		194	144	-50	121	-	-	70	68	-2
University of Alabama		295	198	-97	51	-	-	113	100	-13
University of Kentucky		169	183	14	109	-	-	125	122	-3
University of Missouri		227	175	-52	157	-	-	125	112	-13
University of Nebraska		271	183	-88	96	-	-	143	135	-8
University of South Carolina		169	131	-38	73	-	-	95	103	8
Virginia Tech		227	192	-35	48	-	-	101	94	-7
<b>Aspirational Peers</b>										
Michigan State University		256	211	-45	55	-	-	152	132	-20
Purdue University		95	79	-16	55	-	-	83	80	-3
University of Georgia		69	47	-22	73	-	-	62	66	4
University of Florida		77	65	-12	64	-	-	47	39	-8
University of Minnesota		256	202	-54	83	-	-	65	68	3
University of Wisconsin - Madison		147	131	-16	67	-	-	59	57	-2

USNWR Best Colleges Rankings  
2019-2020 Comparison

UTK Peers	2020 Financial Resources Rank	2019 Financial Resources Rank	Change	2020 Alumni Giving Rank	2019 Alumni Giving Rank	Change
<i>University of Tennessee - Knoxville</i>	110	97	-13	108	105	-3
<b>Comparable Peers</b>						
Auburn University	140	166	26	71	67	-4
Clemson University	140	133	-7	26	27	1
Iowa State University	183	158	-25	108	87	-21
Louisiana State University	148	133	-15	71	87	16
North Carolina State University - Raleigh	103	88	-15	115	105	-10
University of Alabama	231	206	-25	28	19	-9
University of Kentucky	65	65	0	96	75	-21
University of Missouri	174	158	-16	76	75	-1
University of Nebraska	148	142	-6	43	45	2
University of South Carolina	200	181	-19	63	61	-2
Virginia Tech	123	123	0	87	87	0
<b>Aspirational Peers</b>						
Michigan State University	93	109	16	173	122	-51
Purdue University	93	88	-5	38	39	1
University of Georgia	123	123	0	71	62	-9
University of Florida	47	44	-3	63	75	12
University of Minnesota	45	44	-1	158	133	-25
University of Wisconsin - Madison	61	61	0	87	75	-12

USNWR Best Colleges Rankings  
2019-2020 Comparison

UTK Peers	2020 Graduation and Retention Rank	2019 Graduation and Retention Rank	Change	2020 Predicted 6-Year Graduation Rate	2019 Predicted 6-Year Graduation Rate	Change	2020 Actual 6-Year Graduation Rate	2019 Actual 6-Year Graduation Rate	Change	Predicted minus Actual
<i>University of Tennessee - Knoxville</i>	137	124	-13	76.0%	73.0%	3%	73.0%	70.0%	3%	-3%
<b>Comparable Peers</b>										
Auburn University	98	130	32	74.0%	78.0%	-4%	78.0%	77.0%	1%	4%
Clemson University	64	74	10	82.0%	78.0%	4%	83.0%	82.0%	1%	1%
Iowa State University	112	124	12	70.0%	67.0%	3%	75.0%	73.0%	2%	5%
Louisiana State University	167	170	3	67.0%	69.0%	-2%	67.0%	67.0%	0%	0%
North Carolina State University	78	74	-4	79.0%	72.0%	7%	81.0%	79.0%	2%	2%
University of Alabama	141	166	25	75.0%	75.0%	0%	72.0%	68.0%	4%	-3%
University of Kentucky	182	192	10	70.0%	70.0%	0%	66.0%	61.0%	5%	-4%
University of Missouri	145	155	10	71.0%	69.0%	2%	69.0%	68.0%	1%	-2%
University of Nebraska	154	164	10	70.0%	68.0%	2%	69.0%	68.0%	1%	-1%
University of South Carolina	107	124	17	71.0%	68.0%	3%	77.0%	75.0%	2%	6%
Virginia Tech	52	66	14	78.0%	74.0%	4%	84.0%	84.0%	0%	6%
<b>Aspirational Peers</b>										
Michigan State University	82	74	-8	70.0%	69.0%	1%	80.0%	79.0%	1%	10%
Purdue University	88	95	7	76.0%	72.0%	4%	81.0%	79.0%	2%	5%
University of Georgia	46	42	-4	78.0%	76.0%	2%	86.0%	85.0%	1%	8%
University of Florida	33	7	-26	82.0%	82.0%	0%	90.0%	88.0%	2%	8%
University of Minnesota	82	74	-8	78.0%	77.0%	1%	80.0%	80.0%	0%	2%
University of Wisconsin	40	55	15	84.0%	84.0%	0%	87.0%	87.0%	0%	3%

Grad/Ret = 30% (4-yr avg grad rate 17.6%, 4-yr avg ret rate 4.4%, grad rate performance 8%)

USNWR Best Colleges Rankings  
2019-2020 Comparison

UTK Peers	2020 Average Freshmen Retention Rate	2019 Average Freshmen Retention Rate	Change
<i>University of Tennessee - Knoxville</i>	86%	86%	0%
<b>Comparable Peers</b>			
Auburn University	91%	91%	0%
Clemson University	93%	93%	0%
Iowa State University	88%	87%	1%
Louisiana State University	84%	84%	0%
North Carolina State University	94%	94%	0%
University of Alabama	87%	87%	0%
University of Kentucky	83%	83%	0%
University of Missouri	87%	87%	0%
University of Nebraska	83%	83%	0%
University of South Carolina	88%	88%	0%
Virginia Tech	93%	93%	0%
<b>Aspirational Peers</b>			
Michigan State University	92%	92%	0%
Purdue University	92%	93%	-1%
University of Georgia	95%	95%	0%
University of Florida	97%	96%	1%
University of Minnesota	93%	93%	0%
University of Wisconsin	95%	95%	0%

USNWR Best Colleges Rankings  
2019-2020 Comparison

UTK Peers	2020 Social Mobility Rank (NEW)	2019 Social Mobility Rank (N/A)	Change	2020 6-Year Graduation Rate for Pell	2019 6-Year Graduation Rate for Pell	Change	2020 6-Year Graduation Rate for Non-Pell	2019 6-Year Graduation Rate for Non-Pell	Change
<i>University of Tennessee - Knoxville</i>	138	-	-	64.0%	62.0%	2%	76.0%	74.0%	2%
<b>Comparable Peers</b>									
Auburn University	380	-	-	64.0%	65.0%	-1%	80.0%	78.0%	2%
Clemson University	348	-	-	71.0%	71.0%	0%	85.0%	85.0%	0%
Iowa State University	270	-	-	67.0%	63.0%	4%	77.0%	77.0%	0%
Louisiana State University	345	-	-	55.0%	56.0%	-1%	70.0%	69.0%	1%
North Carolina State University	224	-	-	76.0%	72.0%	4%	83.0%	82.0%	1%
University of Alabama	377	-	-	58.0%	51.0%	7%	75.0%	72.0%	3%
University of Kentucky	345	-	-	53.0%	45.0%	8%	70.0%	66.0%	4%
University of Missouri	354	-	-	55.0%	53.0%	2%	73.0%	73.0%	0%
University of Nebraska	303	-	-	59.0%	56.0%	3%	72.0%	72.0%	0%
University of South Carolina	322	-	-	69.0%	64.0%	5%	79.0%	78.0%	1%
Virginia Tech	322	-	-	77.0%	78.0%	-1%	85.0%	86.0%	-1%
<b>Aspirational Peers</b>									
Michigan State University	241	-	-	71.0%	71.0%	0%	83.0%	82.0%	1%
Purdue University	270	-	-	74.0%	72.0%	2%	83.0%	80.0%	3%
University of Georgia	159	-	-	80.0%	80.0%	0%	87.0%	87.0%	0%
University of Florida	34	-	-	87.0%	85.0%	2%	91.0%	90.0%	1%
University of Minnesota	251	-	-	72.0%	71.0%	1%	82.0%	83.0%	-1%
University of Wisconsin	297	-	-	84.0%	83.0%	1%	88.0%	88.0%	0%

Social Mobility = 5% (Pell grad rate 2.5%, Non-Pell grad rate 2.5%)

USNWR Best Colleges Rankings  
2019-2020 Comparison

UTK Peers	2020 Pell / Non-Pell Diff.	2019 Pell / Non-Pell Diff.	2020 vs 2019 Difference	IPEDS 2011 cohort Pell%	IPEDS 2012 cohort Pell%	Cohort Change
<i>University of Tennessee - Knoxville</i>	12%	12%	0%	31%	30%	-1%
<b>Comparable Peers</b>						
Auburn University	16%	13%	3%	13%	13%	0%
Clemson University	14%	14%	0%	17%	16%	-1%
Iowa State University	10%	14%	-4%	23%	n/a	n/a
Louisiana State University	15%	13%	2%	21%	23%	2%
North Carolina State University	7%	10%	-3%	22%	21%	-1%
University of Alabama	17%	21%	-4%	20%	18%	-2%
University of Kentucky	17%	21%	-4%	26%	25%	-1%
University of Missouri	18%	20%	-2%	23%	23%	0%
University of Nebraska	13%	16%	-3%	24%	23%	-1%
University of South Carolina	10%	14%	-4%	20%	19%	-1%
Virginia Tech	8%	8%	0%	15%	15%	0%
<b>Aspirational Peers</b>						
Michigan State University	12%	11%	1%	24%	21%	-3%
Purdue University	9%	8%	1%	19%	19%	0%
University of Georgia	7%	7%	0%	24%	21%	-3%
University of Florida	4%	5%	-1%	32%	30%	-2%
University of Minnesota	10%	12%	-2%	22%	21%	-1%
University of Wisconsin	4%	5%	-1%	16%	13%	-3%

USNWR Best Colleges Rankings  
2019-2020 Comparison

UTK Peers	2020 Faculty Resources Rank	2019 Faculty Resources Rank	Change	2020 Classes Under 20	2019 Classes Under 20	Change	2020 Classes of 50 or More	2019 Classes of 50 or More	Change
<i>University of Tennessee - Knoxville</i>	169	123	-46	30.0%	30.0%	0%	15.0%	14.0%	1%
<b>Comparable Peers</b>									
Auburn University	182	144	-38	35.0%	33.0%	2%	17.0%	16.0%	1%
Clemson University	95	95	0	55.0%	53.0%	2%	14.0%	15.0%	-1%
Iowa State University	227	202	-25	29.0%	29.0%	0%	20.0%	25.0%	-5%
Louisiana State University	182	144	-38	41.0%	41.0%	0%	17.0%	18.0%	-1%
North Carolina State University	194	144	-50	35.0%	36.0%	-1%	16.0%	16.0%	0%
University of Alabama	295	198	-97	34.0%	32.0%	2%	23.0%	22.0%	1%
University of Kentucky	169	183	14	37.0%	32.0%	5%	15.0%	15.0%	0%
University of Missouri	227	175	-52	39.0%	38.0%	1%	17.0%	17.0%	0%
University of Nebraska	271	183	-88	35.0%	35.0%	0%	18.0%	18.0%	0%
University of South Carolina	169	131	-38	37.0%	38.0%	-1%	17.0%	16.0%	1%
Virginia Tech	227	192	-35	27.0%	27.0%	0%	22.0%	22.0%	0%
<b>Aspirational Peers</b>									
Michigan State University	256	211	-45	24.0%	25.0%	-1%	23.0%	24.0%	-1%
Purdue University	95	79	-16	38.0%	38.0%	0%	20.0%	18.0%	2%
University of Georgia	69	47	-22	45.0%	46.0%	-1%	11.0%	11.0%	0%
University of Florida	77	65	-12	50.0%	48.0%	2%	14.0%	16.0%	-2%
University of Minnesota	256	202	-54	38.0%	37.0%	1%	20.0%	20.0%	0%
University of Wisconsin	147	131	-16	45.0%	43.0%	2%	22.0%	22.0%	0%

Faculty Resources = 20% (class size 8%, fac resource rank 7%, percent Ph.D or terminal degree 3%, percent full-time 1%, ratio 1%)



USNWR Best Colleges Rankings  
2019-2020 Comparison

UTK Peers	2020 Faculty Compensation Rank	2019 Faculty Compensation Rank	Change	2020 % Full-Time Faculty	2019 % Full-Time Faculty	Change	2020 % Faculty with Ph.D or Terminal Degree	2019 % Faculty with Ph.D or Terminal Degree	Change	
<i>University of Tennessee - Knoxville</i>	55	-	-	95.9%	96.2%	-0.3%	86.0%	87.0%	-1.0%	
<b>Comparable Peers</b>										
Auburn University	70	-	-	94.7%	94.7%	0.0%	90.0%	90.0%	0.0%	
Clemson University	70	-	-	90.8%	90.4%	0.4%	87.0%	86.0%	1.0%	
Iowa State University	83	-	-	93.9%	93.7%	0.2%	94.0%	93.0%	1.0%	
Louisiana State University	83	-	-	95.8%	96.1%	-0.3%	87.0%	86.0%	1.0%	
North Carolina State University	121	-	-	95.0%	94.9%	0.1%	92.0%	93.0%	-1.0%	
University of Alabama	51	-	-	89.2%	88.9%	0.3%	74.0%	81.0%	-7.0%	
University of Kentucky	109	-	-	86.0%	86.7%	-0.7%	92.0%	93.0%	-1.0%	
University of Missouri	157	-	-	98.2%	98.2%	0.0%	91.0%	91.0%	0.0%	
University of Nebraska	96	-	-	97.6%	99.6%	-2.0%	80.0%	90.0%	-10.0%	
University of South Carolina	73	-	-	87.0%	87.2%	-0.2%	89.0%	89.0%	0.0%	
Virginia Tech	48	-	-	96.1%	96.0%	0.1%	90.0%	91.0%	-1.0%	
<b>Aspirational Peers</b>										
Michigan State University	55	-	-	95.3%	94.7%	0.6%	90.0%	90.0%	0.0%	
Purdue University	55	-	-	95.3%	95.1%	0.2%	98.0%	98.0%	0.0%	
University of Georgia	73	-	-	95.8%	95.6%	0.2%	94.0%	94.0%	0.0%	
University of Florida	64	-	-	94.2%	94.1%	0.1%	90.0%	92.0%	-2.0%	
University of Minnesota	83	-	-	87.2%	87.6%	-0.4%	80.0%	80.0%	0.0%	
University of Wisconsin	67	-	-	93.9%	93.9%	0.0%	91.0%	90.0%	1.0%	

USNWR Best Colleges Rankings  
2019-2020 Comparison

UTK Peers	2020 Student/Faculty Ratio	2019 Student/Faculty Ratio
<i>University of Tennessee - Knoxville</i>	17:1	17:1
<b>Comparable Peers</b>		
Auburn University	19:1	19:1
Clemson University	16:1	16:1
Iowa State University	19:1	19:1
Louisiana State University	20:1	20:1
North Carolina State University	14:1	13:1
University of Alabama	22:1	23:1
University of Kentucky	16:1	17:1
University of Missouri	17:1	18:1
University of Nebraska	18:1	21:1
University of South Carolina	17:1	17:1
Virginia Tech	14:1	14:1
<b>Aspirational Peers</b>		
Michigan State University	16:1	16:1
Purdue University	13:1	13:1
University of Georgia	17:1	17:1
University of Florida	18:1	19:1
University of Minnesota	17:1	17:1
University of Wisconsin	17:1	18:1

USNWR Best Colleges Rankings  
2019-2020 Comparison

UTK Peers	2020 Student Excellence Rank	2019 Student Excellence Rank	Change	2020 ACT 25th-75th Percentile	2019 ACT 25th-75th Percentile	2020 Freshmen in Top 10% of Class	2019 Freshmen in Top 10% of Class	Change	
<i>University of Tennessee - Knoxville</i>	83	112	29	25-31	24-30	36%	N/A	-	
<b>Comparable Peers</b>									
Auburn University	90	94	4	25-30	24-30	32%	31%	1%	
Clemson University	65	57	-8	27-32	27-31	56%	62%	-6%	
Iowa State University	152	139	-13	22-28	22-28	27%	25%	2%	
Louisiana State University	134	122	-12	23-29	23-28	23%	23%	0%	
North Carolina State University - Raleigh	70	68	-2	26-31*	27-31*	48%	46%	2%	
University of Alabama	113	100	-13	23-31	23-32	36%	39%	-3%	
University of Kentucky	125	122	-3	23-29	22-28	31%	29%	2%	
University of Missouri	125	112	-13	23-29	23-29	30%	29%	1%	
University of Nebraska	143	135	-8	22-29	22-29	26%	26%	0%	
University of South Carolina	95	103	8	24-30*	25-30*	29%	29%	0%	
Virginia Tech	101	94	-7	24-31*	26-31*	38%	38%	0%	
<b>Aspirational Peers</b>									
Michigan State University	152	132	-20	22-28*	24-29*	29%	30%	-1%	
Purdue University	83	80	-3	24-31*	25-31*	46%	44%	2%	
University of Georgia	62	66	4	26-31*	26-31	60%	54%	6%	
University of Florida	47	39	-8	27-32*	27-32*	77%	77%	0%	
University of Minnesota	65	68	3	26-31	26-31	50%	50%	0%	
University of Wisconsin - Madison	59	57	-2	27-32	27-31	54%	52%	2%	

Student Excellence (selectivity) = 10% (SAT/ACT 7.75%, rank 2.25%)

USNWR Best Colleges Rankings  
2019-2020 Comparison

UTK Peers	2020 Alumni Giving Rank	2019 Alumni Giving Rank	Change	2020 Average Alumni Giving Rate	2019 Average Alumni Giving Rate	Change
<i>University of Tennessee - Knoxville</i>	108	105	-3	10.7%	10.5%	0.2%
<b>Comparable Peers</b>						
Auburn University	71	67	-4	13.1%	13.1%	0.0%
Clemson University	26	27	1	23.5%	22.9%	0.6%
Iowa State University	108	87	-21	11.0%	11.4%	-0.4%
Louisiana State University	71	87	16	13.3%	11.8%	1.5%
North Carolina State University	115	105	-10	10.3%	10.2%	0.1%
University of Alabama	28	19	-9	23.4%	27.1%	-3.7%
University of Kentucky	96	75	-21	11.3%	12.4%	-1.1%
University of Missouri	76	75	-1	12.3%	12.6%	-0.3%
University of Nebraska	43	45	2	18.1%	18.2%	-0.1%
University of South Carolina	63	61	-2	14.3%	14.3%	0.0%
Virginia Tech	87	87	0	12.3%	11.5%	0.8%
<b>Aspirational Peers</b>						
Michigan State University	173	122	-51	7.6%	8.5%	-0.9%
Purdue University	38	39	1	18.3%	18.6%	-0.3%
University of Georgia	71	62	-9	13.4%	13.6%	-0.2%
University of Florida	63	75	12	14.4%	12.8%	1.6%
University of Minnesota	158	133	-25	7.7%	8.2%	-0.5%
University of Wisconsin	87	75	-12	11.9%	12.9%	-1.0%

Alumni Giving 5%

## USNWR Best Colleges Rankings 2020 Peer Rankings Comparison

UTK Peers	National Universities	Public Schools	Overall Score	Outcomes Rank	Faculty Resources Rank	Student Excellence Rank	Financial Resources Rank	Alumni Giving Rank
<i>University of Tennessee - Knoxville</i>	104	44	51	170	169	83	110	108
<b>Comparable Peers</b>								
Auburn University	104	44	51	144	182	90	140	71
Clemson University	70	27	58	114	95	65	140	26
Iowa State University	121	55	49	136	227	152	183	108
Louisiana State University	153	72	43	208	182	134	148	71
North Carolina State University - Raleigh	84	34	54	89	194	70	103	115
University of Alabama	153	72	43	214	295	113	231	28
University of Kentucky	132	60	46	234	169	125	65	96
University of Missouri	139	64	45	201	227	125	174	76
University of Nebraska	139	64	45	201	271	143	148	43
University of South Carolina	104	44	51	133	169	95	200	63
Virginia Tech	74	30	57	72	227	101	123	87
<b>Aspirational Peers</b>								
Michigan State University	84	34	54	61	256	152	93	173
Purdue University	57	18	61	100	95	83	93	38
University of Georgia	50	16	63	26	69	62	123	71
University of Florida	34	7	71	4	77	47	47	63
University of Minnesota	70	27	58	100	256	65	45	158
University of Wisconsin - Madison	46	13	65	61	147	59	61	87

## USNWR Best Colleges Rankings 2020 Peer Categories Comparison

UTK Peers	Public Schools	Overall Score	Expert Opinion	Graduation and Retention Rank	Predicted 6-Year Graduation Rate	Actual 6-Year Graduation Rate	Over(+)/Under(-) Performance
<i>University of Tennessee - Knoxville</i>	44	51	3.3	137	76%	73%	-3%
<b>Comparable Peers</b>							
Auburn University	44	51	3.3	98	74%	78%	4%
Clemson University	27	58	3.4	64	82%	83%	1%
Iowa State University	55	49	3.3	112	70%	75%	5%
Louisiana State University	72	43	2.9	167	67%	67%	0%
North Carolina State University - Raleigh	34	54	3.2	78	79%	81%	2%
University of Alabama	72	43	3.1	141	75%	72%	-3%
University of Kentucky	60	46	3.2	182	70%	66%	-4%
University of Missouri	64	45	3.2	145	71%	69%	-2%
University of Nebraska	64	45	3.2	154	70%	69%	-1%
University of South Carolina	44	51	3.2	107	71%	77%	6%
Virginia Tech	30	57	3.7	52	78%	84%	6%
<b>Aspirational Peers</b>							
Michigan State University	34	54	3.5	82	70%	80%	10%
Purdue University	18	61	3.8	88	76%	81%	5%
University of Georgia	16	63	3.6	46	78%	86%	8%
University of Florida	7	71	3.8	33	82%	90%	8%
University of Minnesota	27	58	3.7	82	78%	80%	2%
University of Wisconsin - Madison	13	65	4.1	40	84%	87%	3%

\* Converted from SAT scores

## USNWR Best Colleges Rankings 2020 Peer Categories Comparison

UTK Peers	Average Freshmen Retention Rate	Social Mobility Rank	2020 6-Year Graduation Rate for Pell	2020 6-Year Graduation Rate for Non-Pell	Classes Under 20	Classes of 50 or More	Student/Faculty Ratio
<i>University of Tennessee - Knoxville</i>	86%	138	64%	76%	30.0%	15.0%	17:1
<b>Comparable Peers</b>							
Auburn University	91%	380	64%	80%	35.0%	17.0%	19:1
Clemson University	93%	348	71%	85%	55.0%	14.0%	16:1
Iowa State University	88%	270	67%	77%	29.0%	20.0%	19:1
Louisiana State University	84%	345	55%	70%	41.0%	17.0%	20:1
North Carolina State University - Raleigh	94%	224	76%	83%	35.0%	16.0%	14:1
University of Alabama	87%	377	58%	75%	34.0%	23.0%	22:1
University of Kentucky	83%	345	53%	70%	37.0%	15.0%	16:1
University of Missouri	87%	354	55%	73%	39.0%	17.0%	17:1
University of Nebraska	83%	303	59%	72%	35.0%	18.0%	18:1
University of South Carolina	88%	322	69%	79%	37.0%	17.0%	17:1
Virginia Tech	93%	322	77%	85%	27.0%	22.0%	14:1
<b>Aspirational Peers</b>							
Michigan State University	92%	241	71%	83%	24.0%	23.0%	16:1
Purdue University	92%	270	74%	83%	38.0%	20.0%	13:1
University of Georgia	95%	159	80%	87%	45.0%	11.0%	17:1
University of Florida	97%	34	87%	91%	50.0%	14.0%	18:1
University of Minnesota	93%	251	72%	82%	38.0%	20.0%	17:1
University of Wisconsin - Madison	95%	297	84%	88%	45.0%	22.0%	17:1

\* Converted from SAT scores

## USNWR Best Colleges Rankings 2020 Peer Categories Comparison

UTK Peers	2020 Faculty Compensation Rank	% Full-Time Faculty	% Faculty with Ph.D or Terminal Degree	ACT 25th-75th Percentile	Freshmen in Top 10% of Class	Average Alumni Giving Rate
<i>University of Tennessee - Knoxville</i>	55	95.9%	86.0%	25-31	36%	10.7%
<b>Comparable Peers</b>						
Auburn University	70	94.7%	90.0%	25-30	32%	13.1%
Clemson University	70	90.8%	87.0%	27-32	56%	23.5%
Iowa State University	83	93.9%	94.0%	22-28	27%	11.0%
Louisiana State University	83	95.8%	87.0%	23-29	23%	13.3%
North Carolina State University - Raleigh	121	95.0%	92.0%	26-31*	48%	10.3%
University of Alabama	51	89.2%	74.0%	23-31	36%	23.4%
University of Kentucky	109	86.0%	92.0%	23-29	31%	11.3%
University of Missouri	157	98.2%	91.0%	23-29	30%	12.3%
University of Nebraska	96	97.6%	80.0%	22-29	26%	18.1%
University of South Carolina	73	87.0%	89.0%	24-30*	29%	14.3%
Virginia Tech	48	96.1%	90.0%	24-31*	38%	12.3%
<b>Aspirational Peers</b>						
Michigan State University	55	95.3%	90.0%	22-28*	29%	7.6%
Purdue University	55	95.3%	98.0%	24-31*	46%	18.3%
University of Georgia	73	95.8%	94.0%	26-31*	60%	13.4%
University of Florida	64	94.2%	90.0%	27-32*	77%	14.4%
University of Minnesota	83	87.2%	80.0%	26-31	50%	7.7%
University of Wisconsin - Madison	67	93.9%	91.0%	27-32	54%	11.9%

\* Converted from SAT scores



## USNWR Best Colleges Rankings 2019 Peer Categories Comparison

UTK Peers	Public Schools	Overall Score	Peer Assessment	High School Counselor Score	Predicted 6-Year Graduation Rate	Actual 6-Year Graduation Rate	Over(+)/Under(-) Performance
<i>University of Tennessee - Knoxville</i>							
	52	48	3.2	3.7	73.0%	70.0%	-3%
<b>Comparable Peers</b>							
Auburn University	52	48	3.3	3.8	78.0%	77.0%	-1%
Clemson University	24	58	3.3	4.1	78.0%	82.0%	4%
Iowa State University	56	47	3.3	3.7	67.0%	73.0%	6%
Louisiana State University	70	42	2.9	3.6	69.0%	67.0%	-2%
North Carolina State University - Raleigh	35	53	3.2	3.7	72.0%	79.0%	7%
University of Alabama	61	44	3.2	3.8	75.0%	68.0%	-7%
University of Kentucky	75	41	3.1	3.7	70.0%	61.0%	-9%
University of Missouri	61	44	3.2	3.7	69.0%	68.0%	-1%
University of Nebraska	61	44	3.1	3.7	68.0%	68.0%	0%
University of South Carolina	46	49	3.1	3.8	68.0%	75.0%	7%
Virginia Tech	30	56	3.5	4.2	74.0%	84.0%	10%
<b>Aspirational Peers</b>							
Michigan State University	35	53	3.5	3.9	69.0%	79.0%	10%
Purdue University	17	61	3.8	4.2	72.0%	79.0%	7%
University of Georgia	13	64	3.6	4.1	76.0%	85.0%	9%
University of Florida	8	69	3.7	4.1	82.0%	88.0%	6%
University of Minnesota	30	56	3.7	3.8	77.0%	80.0%	3%
University of Wisconsin - Madison	15	63	4.0	4.2	84.0%	87.0%	3%

\* Converted from SAT scores

## USNWR Best Colleges Rankings 2019 Peer Categories Comparison

UTK Peers	Average Freshmen Retention Rate	Classes Under 20	Classes of 50 or More	Student/Faculty Ratio	ACT 25th-75th Percentile	Freshmen in Top 10% of Class	Average Alumni Giving Rate
<i>University of Tennessee - Knoxville</i>							
	86%	30.0%	14.0%	17:1	24-30	N/A	10.5%
<b>Comparable Peers</b>							
Auburn University	91%	33.0%	16.0%	19:1	24-30	31%	13.1%
Clemson University	93%	53.0%	15.0%	16:1	27-31	62%	22.9%
Iowa State University	87%	29.0%	25.0%	19:1	22-28	25%	11.4%
Louisiana State University	84%	41.0%	18.0%	20:1	23-28	23%	11.8%
North Carolina State University - Raleigh	94%	36.0%	16.0%	13:1	27-31	46%	10.2%
University of Alabama	87%	32.0%	22.0%	23:1	23-32	39%	27.1%
University of Kentucky	83%	32.0%	15.0%	17:1	22-28	29%	12.4%
University of Missouri	87%	38.0%	17.0%	18:1	23-29	29%	12.6%
University of Nebraska	83%	35.0%	18.0%	21:1	22-29	26%	18.2%
University of South Carolina	88%	38.0%	16.0%	17:1	25-30	29%	14.3%
Virginia Tech	93%	27.0%	22.0%	14:1	26-31*	38%	11.5%
<b>Aspirational Peers</b>							
Michigan State University	92%	25.0%	24.0%	16:1	24-29*	30%	8.5%
Purdue University	93%	38.0%	18.0%	13:1	25-31*	44%	18.6%
University of Georgia	95%	46.0%	11.0%	17:1	26-31	54%	13.6%
University of Florida	96%	48.0%	16.0%	19:1	27-32*	77%	12.8%
University of Minnesota	93%	37.0%	20.0%	17:1	26-31	50%	8.2%
University of Wisconsin - Madison	95%	43.0%	22.0%	18:1	27-31	52%	12.9%

\* Converted from SAT scores

**USNWR Best Colleges Rankings  
2020 SEC Schools Comparison**

<b>SEC Comparison</b>	<b>UTK</b>	<b>Ole Miss</b>	<b>Miss State</b>	<b>Arkansas</b>	<b>Kentucky</b>	<b>South Carolina</b>	<b>Missouri</b>	<b>Auburn</b>	<b>Alabama</b>	<b>Texas A&amp;M</b>	<b>UGA</b>	<b>Florida</b>	<b>Vanderbilt</b>	<b>LSU</b>
National Rank	104	162	211	153	132	104	139	104	153	70	50	34	15	153
Public School Rank	44	76	101	72	60	44	64	44	72	27	16	7	-	72
Overall Score	51	42	35	43	46	51	45	51	43	58	63	71	84	43
Outcomes Rank	170	228	277	234	234	133	201	144	214	61	26	4	47	208
Graduation and Retention Rank	137	192	215	187	182	107	145	98	141	73	46	33	19	167
Social Mobility Rank	138	354	335	370	345	322	354	380	377	96	159	34	291	345
Faculty Resource Rank	169	194	300	194	169	169	227	182	295	300	69	77	16	182
Student Excellence Rank	83	163	125	134	125	95	125	90	113	79	62	47	11	134
Financial Resources Rank	110	123	174	183	65	200	200	140	231	103	123	47	11	148
Alumni Giving Rank	108	115	60	31	96	63	76	71	28	52	71	63	21	71
Peer Assessment Score (Out of 5)	3.3	3.0	2.7	3.0	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.1	3.7	3.6	3.8	4.3	2.9
Predicted 6 year Graduation Rate	76%	64%	66%	67%	70%	71%	71%	74%	75%	78%	78%	82%	98%	67%
Actual 6 Year Graduation Rate	73%	64%	58%	66%	66%	77%	69%	78%	72%	82%	86%	90%	94%	67%
Over/Under Performance	-3%	0%	-8%	-1%	-4%	6%	-2%	4%	-3%	4%	8%	8%	-4%	0%
Average Freshman Retention Rate	86%	86%	80%	83%	83%	88%	87%	91%	87%	91%	95%	97%	97%	84%
% of Classes Under 20	30.0%	51.0%	37.0%	46.0%	37.0%	37.0%	39.0%	35.0%	34.0%	21.0%	45.0%	50.0%	66.0%	41.0%
% of Classes of 50 or More	15.0%	14.0%	15.0%	18.0%	15.0%	17.0%	17.0%	17.0%	23.0%	27.0%	11.0%	14.0%	7.0%	17.0%
Student-Faculty Ratio	17:1	17:1	17:1	19:1	16:1	17:1	17:1	19:1	22:1	20:1	17:1	18:1	7:1	20:1
ACT Low/High	25-31	21-29	22-29	23-29	23-29	24-30*	23-29	25-30	23-31	24-30*	26-31*	27-32*	33-35	23-29
Freshman in Top 10% of HS Class	36%	25%	29%	25%	31%	29%	30%	32%	36%	63%	60%	77%	89%	23%
Average Alumni Giving Rate	11.0%	10.0%	15.0%	21.0%	11.0%	14.0%	12.0%	13.0%	23.0%	17.0%	13.0%	14.0%	26.0%	13.0%

\*Converted from SAT Scores

**USNWR Best Colleges Rankings**  
**Institutions Tied with UTK at National Ranking = 104**

	Outcomes Rank	Graduation Over(+) / Under(-) Performance	Average Freshmen Retention Rate	Actual 6-Year Graduation Rate	Faculty Resources Rank	Student Excellence Rank	Financial Resources Rank	Alumni Giving Rank
<b>2020 Rankings</b>								
Auburn University	144	4%	91%	78%	182	90	140	71
Creighton University	136	1%	89%	77%	110	101	103	76
Howard University	127	1%	89%	62%	227	152	49	108
Loyola University Chicago	100	4%	84%	75%	136	113	140	220
Rochester Inst. of Technology	158	-1%	89%	70%	147	83	123	220
Temple University	55	14%	90%	72%	182	152	148	220
University of California--Merced	1	23%	83%	66%	246	351	93	76
University of Colorado--Boulder	185	0%	87%	70%	210	107	81	205
University of Oregon	121	8%	87%	72%	136	177	148	158
Univ. of South Carolina	133	6%	88%	77%	169	95	200	63
University of South Florida	38	12%	90%	70%	256	111	211	87
University of Tennessee	170	-3%	86%	73%	169	83	110	108
<b>2019 Rankings</b>								
Arizona State University	142	4%	86%	63%	117	117	166	96
Auburn University	130	-1%	91%	77%	144	94	166	67
Rutgers University	85	14%	85%	68%	131	259	104	209
University of Tennessee	124	-3%	86%	70%	123	112	97	105
<b>2018 Rankings</b>								
Auburn University	97	-3%	90%	75%	145	101	174	79
Illinois Institute of Technology	110	-3%	92%	71%	69	60	121	152
Loyola University	102	4%	85%	75%	106	96	121	184
University of New Hampshire	83	17%	86%	78%	150	189	136	173
University of Oregon	110	9%	87%	72%	106	172	147	127
University of South Carolina	97	5%	88%	73%	159	104	179	61
University of Tennessee	120	-2%	86%	69%	124	84	84	102
<b>2017 Rankings</b>								
Illinois Institute of Technology	102	-4%	92%	73%	66	63	112	152
University of Alabama	125	-2%	86%	67%	137	89	212	13
University of Oregon	113	10%	87%	72%	108	155	162	127
University of Tennessee	122	-2%	86%	70%	137	79	72	115

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

<b>Expert Opinion (academic reputation)</b>	20.0%	Peer assessment survey	20%
		High school counselors' ratings has been removed	-
<b>Outcomes (graduation/retention)</b>	35.0%	Social Mobility (Pell)	5%
		Average graduation rate	17.6%
		Average freshman retention rate	4.4%
		Graduation Rate Performance	8%
<b>Faculty resources</b>	20.0%	Faculty compensation	7%
		Percent faculty with terminal degree in their field	3%
		Percent faculty that is full time	1%
		Student/faculty ratio	1%
		Class size	8%
<b>Student Excellence (Selectivity)</b> (Fall 2018 entering class)	10.0%	High school class standing in top 10%	2.25%
		Critical Reading and Math portions of the SAT and the composite ACT scores	7.75%
<b>Financial Resources</b> (the average of fiscal years 2017 and 2018)	10.0%	Financial resources per student	
<b>Alumni Giving</b> (Average of 2016-17 and 2017-18)	5.0%	Average alumni giving rate	

## **Outcomes (35%)**

More than one-third of a school's rank comes from its success at retaining and graduating students within 150 percent of normal time (six years). It receives the highest weight in our rankings because degree completion is necessary to receive the full benefits of undergraduate study from employers and graduate schools. We approach outcomes from angles of social mobility (5 percent), graduation and retention (22 percent), and graduation rate performance (8 percent).

**Graduation and retention rates:** This has two components.

- A four-year rolling average of the proportion of each entering class (fall 2009-fall 2012) earning a degree in six years or less (17.6%).
- A four-year rolling average of the proportion of first-year entering students (fall 2014-fall 2017) 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 2012 entering class. The predicted rates were modeled from admissions data, proportion of undergraduates awarded Pell Grants, school financial resources, proportion of federal financial aid recipients who are first generation, and National Universities' math and science, or STEM, orientations.

The first-generation students variable was new for the 2020 rankings and in effect gives schools more credit for their graduation rates when accomplished with higher proportions of students who were the first in their immediate families to attend college. The data was sourced from the U.S. Department of Education's College Scorecard. Its inclusion improved the model's predictive power.

**Social mobility:** Measures how well schools graduated students who received federal Pell Grants (those typically coming from households whose family incomes are less than \$50,000 annually, though most Pell Grant money goes to students with a total family income below \$20,000). New for the 2020 edition, data sourced from the federal government was used for nonresponders. Also, the below factors (weighted 2.5% each) were computed using two-year averages of fall 2011 and fall 2012 entering cohorts.

- **Pell Grant graduation rates** are the six-year graduation rates of Pell Grant students adjusted to give much more credit to schools with larger Pell student proportions.
- **Pell Grant graduation rate performance** is the factor that 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.

There have been changes with how the graduation and retention rate benchmark ranking was calculated. It is once again computed from a school's total score in these two ranking indicators: average six-year graduation rate and average first-year retention rate. In the 2019 edition only, it was based on a school's score in these four ranking factors: average six-year graduation rate, average first-year retention rate, Pell Grant graduation rate and Pell Grant graduation rate performance.

## **Faculty Resources (20 percent)**

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 likely graduate. U.S. News uses five factors from the 2018-2019 academic year to assess a school's commitment to instruction: class size, faculty salary, faculty with the highest degree in their fields, student-faculty ratio and proportion of faculty who are full time.

- **Class size** is the most highly weighted faculty resource measure, at 8%. Schools score better the greater their proportions of smaller classes for fall 2018.
- **Faculty salary** is weighted at 7 % and is the average faculty pay, plus benefits, during the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 academic years, adjusted for regional differences in the cost of living. Nonresponders to the faculty salary question for the first time had modified federal government faculty salary data used as the basis for their estimates. Also new for the 2020 rankings, the faculty salary figures were adjusted using open source data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis regional price parities 2017 dataset published in May 2019. These regional price indexes allow comparisons from one metro area to another and measure the differences in price levels across states and metropolitan areas for a given year. They are expressed as a percentage of the overall national price level. The regional price indexes cover all consumption goods and services, including housing rents.
- U.S. News also factors the **proportion of full-time faculty with the highest degree in their fields** (3 percent), **student-faculty ratio** (1 percent) and the **proportion of faculty who are full time** (1 percent).

## **Expert Opinion (20 percent)**

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.

We take a two-year weighted average of ratings from top academics – presidents, provosts and deans of admissions – who rate the academic quality of peer institutions with which they are familiar on a scale of 1 (marginal) to 5 (distinguished).

U.S. News collected the data by administering peer assessment surveys in spring 2018 and 2019 directly to schools. Of the 4,815 academics who were sent questionnaires, 43% responded. This response rate is well up from 36% the previous year. The high school counselor opinion survey was not administered and its ranking factor was dropped from the National Universities and National Liberal Arts Colleges rankings formulas altogether because U.S. News had greater confidence in its peer assessment data.

### **Financial Resources (10 percent)**

Generous per-student spending indicates that a college can offer a wide 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 2017 and 2018 fiscal years. Spending on sports, dorms and hospitals does not count.

A small adjustment for the 2020 rankings: For improved cohort alignment, we adjusted the denominator cohorts a year back so that fiscal year 2018 spending was compared with 2017 enrollment and fiscal year 2017 spending was compared with 2016 enrollment.

For nonresponders, data sourced from the federal government was used – a change from the previous rankings edition.

### **Student Excellence (10 percent)**

A school's academic atmosphere is influenced by the selectivity of its admissions. Simply put, students who achieved strong grades and test scores during high school have the highest probability of succeeding at challenging college-level coursework; enabling instructors to design classes that have great rigor.

**Standardized tests:** U.S. News factors admissions test scores for all enrollees who took the mathematics and evidence-based reading and writing portions of the SAT and the composite ACT. We weighted standardized tests at 7.75%. 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 summer 2018. 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%. If the combined percentage of the fall 2018 entering class submitting test scores is less than 75% of all new entrants, its combined SAT/ACT percentile distribution value used in the rankings was discounted by 15%.

**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. It contributes 2.25% toward schools' overall scores.

### **Alumni Giving (5 percent)**

This is the average percentage of living alumni with bachelor's degrees who gave to their school during 2016-2017 and 2017-2018. Giving measures student satisfaction and post-graduate engagement. This year, U.S. News only incorporated data it collected from its own data collection.