

U.S. News & World Report 2024 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 the following criteria: such as outcomes, peer assessments, faculty and financial resources, student excellence, and faculty research. Rankings serve a purpose, but only measure a small portion of what we use as an institution to measure our success.

This report presents the 2024 U.S. News Best Colleges Rankings for the University of Tennessee - Knoxville and our peers.

The University of Tennessee - Knoxville	2021	2022	2023	2024
Overall Rankings				
<i>National Universities</i>	112	103	115	105
<i>Public School</i>	52	46	53	51
Institutional Scores/Rankings				
<i>Overall Score</i>	59	60	59	63
<i>Expert Opinion</i>	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3
<i>Outcomes Rank</i>	147	157	171	202
<i>Average Six-year graduation rate</i>	72%	71%	72%	73%
<i>Average freshmen retention rate</i>	87%	87%	88%	89%
<i>Over/Under Predicted graduation rate</i>	0	-5	-6	-6
<i>Median Federal Indebtedness</i>	\$20,584	\$20,308	\$19,810	\$20,500
<i>College grads earning more than high school grads *</i>	-	-	-	80%
<i>Social Mobility Rank</i>	161	192	250	312
<i>Pell grad rate</i>	-	61%	60%	61%
<i>First generation grad rate*</i>	-	-	-	60%
<i>Faculty Resources Rank</i>	166	141	198	78
<i>Faculty Compensation Rank</i>	51	49	55	63
<i>Percentage of faculty that is full time</i>	96%	96%	94%	94%
<i>Student/Faculty Ratio</i>	17/1	17/1	17/1	18/1
<i>Student Excellence Rank</i>				
<i>SAT/ACT 25th-75th percentile</i>	24-30	25-31	25-31	25-31
<i>Financial Resources Rank</i>	116	125	132	133
<i>Faculty Research *</i>	-	-	-	41

* **New Categories**

The University of Tennessee - Knoxville

In the 2024 rankings, the University of Tennessee – Knoxville (UTK) rose to #105 in the national rankings and to #51 in the public school rankings. In the national rankings UTK is tied with nine other institutions and with six in the public ranking.

The university was listed in the Most Innovative Schools rankings for the first time at 58th nationally and 29th among public schools which was better than ten of our sixteen peers. UTK was also once again ranked in the Best Colleges for Veterans rankings at 71st nationally and 51st (down 1) among publics.

Our undergraduate business program ranked 38th nationally (up 1) and 25th among publics (up 1 place). The supply chain/logistics program is again highly ranked at 4th nationally (down 1) and is also still 3rd among public schools. Undergraduate engineering is ranked 61st (up 7 places) nationally and 34th among publics (up 4 places). Nursing came in at 67th (down 16 spots) nationally and 51st among publics (down 14 places). Computer Science ranked 71st nationally (up 1) and 38 among publics while Economics (53rd public) and Psychology (54th public) were ranked for the first time. These discipline rankings are based solely on the peer surveys of deans and senior faculty members of the different programs.

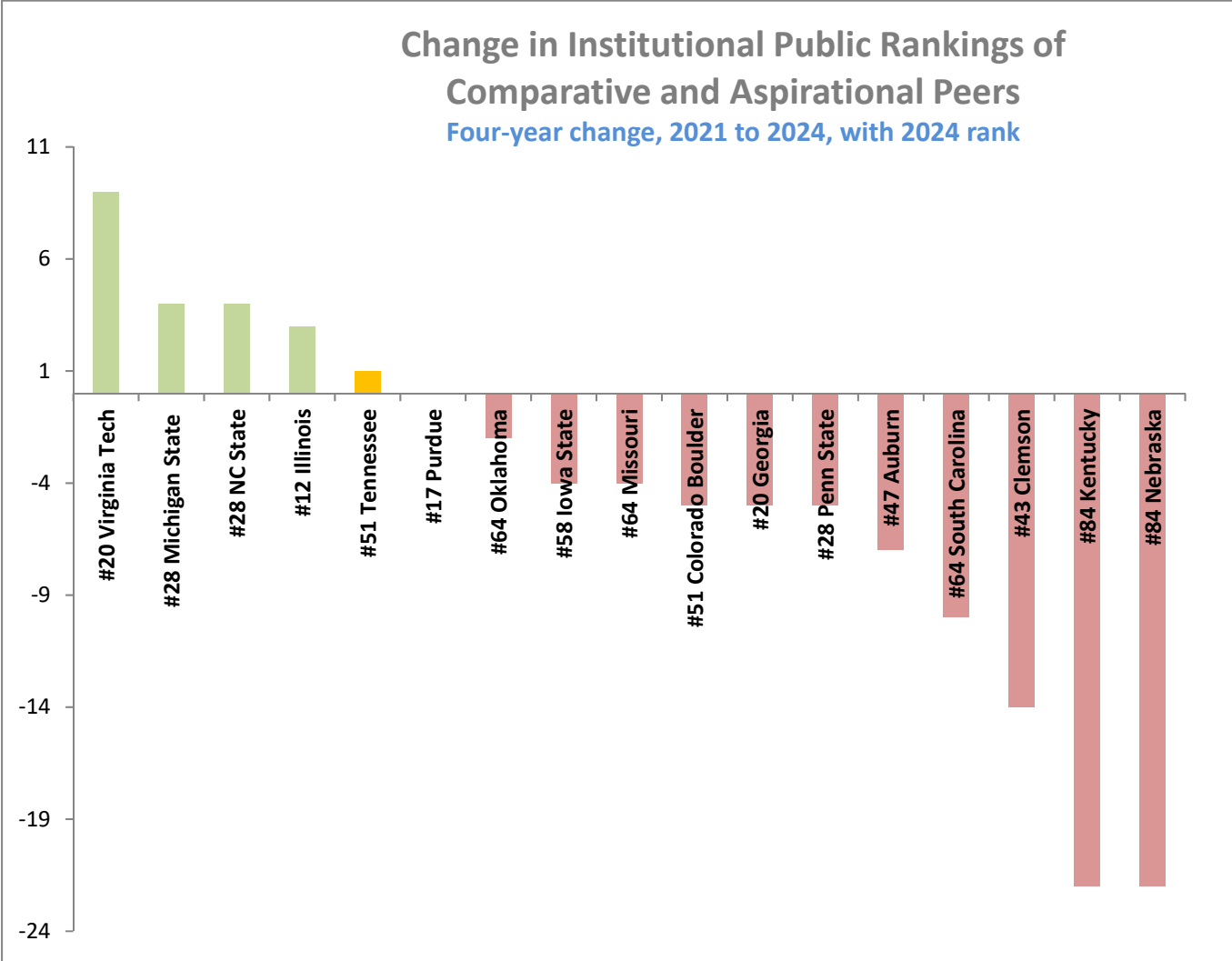
U.S. News made the following major changes in their methodology this year.

- Outcomes increased from 40% to 52% by slightly increasing some weights and adding First-Generation graduation rates and graduate earnings.
- Graduation rate performance is now based on a 4-year average (up from 2-year).
- Faculty Salary includes all full-time instructional faculty (regardless of tenure or rank).
- Faculty research is a new ranking based on 4 measures of faculty citations from Elsevier.
- Financial Resources now only uses 1 year of data (sourced from IPEDS, FY21).
- Metrics dropped: class size, high school class standing, number of faculty with terminal degree, alumni giving.

UTK dropped in the Outcomes rank, moving down from 171 to 202. The drop was most likely fueled by a decrease in our Social Mobility Rank (from 250 to 312) driven by the addition of first-generation graduation rates. We also had minor ranking decreases in Financial Resources (132 to 133) and Faculty Compensation (55 to 63).

The University had a significant increase in our Faculty Resource Rank, improving from 198 to 78. We also ranked higher in the new Faculty Research category (41) than all but one of our peers.

The following chart shows the changes in Public Ranking of our comparative and aspirational peers over a three year period, from 2022 to 2024. Over this period, 4 peers increased their rank and 11 peers decreased with 2 having no change.



Peer Comparisons

The University of Tennessee – Knoxville has two sets of comparison peers: Comparative (10) and Aspirational (6). In the following section, we list the schools that exhibited the largest increases or decreases in the different categories. The movement in the rankings are in our opinion mostly caused by the significant changes in methodology by US News.

UTK Peers	2024 National Universities	2023 National Universities	Change	2024 Public Schools	2023 Public Schools	Change
<i>University of Tennessee - Knoxville</i>	105	115	10	51	53	2
Comparable Peers						
Auburn University	93	97	4	47	42	-5
Clemson University	86	77	-9	43	31	-12
Iowa State University	115	127	12	58	61	3
University of Colorado Boulder	105	97	-8	51	42	-9
University of Kentucky	159	137	-22	84	64	-20
University of Missouri	124	121	-3	64	56	-8
University of Nebraska	159	151	-8	84	72	-12
University of Oklahoma	124	127	3	64	61	-3
University of South Carolina	124	115	-9	64	53	-11
Virginia Tech	47	62	15	20	23	3
Aspirational Peers						
Michigan State University	60	77	17	28	31	3
North Carolina State University - Raleigh	60	72	12	28	29	1
Purdue University	43	51	8	17	18	1
University of Georgia	47	49	2	20	16	-4
Pennsylvania State University	60	77	17	28	31	3
University of Illinois	35	41	6	12	13	1
Other SEC Peers						
Louisiana State University	185	176	-9	101	87	-14
University of Alabama	170	137	-33	91	64	-27
University of Florida	28	29	1	6	5	-1
Mississippi State University	216	194	-22	116	100	-16
University of Mississippi	163	151	-12	88	72	-16
Texas A&M University	47	67	20	20	26	6
University of Arkansas	178	176	-2	96	87	-9
Vanderbilt	18	13	-5	-	-	-

Comparative Peers

- National Universities Ranking
 - Increased in rank: Virginia Tech (15), Iowa State (12), and UTK (10)
 - Decreased in rank: University of Kentucky (-22), Clemson University (-9), University of South Carolina (-9), University of Colorado Boulder (-8), and the University of Nebraska (-8)
- Public Universities Ranking
 - Increased in rank: Virginia Tech (3), Iowa State (3), and UTK (2)
 - Decreased in rank: University of Kentucky (-20), Clemson University (-12), University of Nebraska (-12), University of South Carolina (-11), University of Colorado Boulder (-9), and the University of Missouri (-8)

- Outcomes Rank
 - Increased in rank: University of Oklahoma (4)
 - Decreased in rank: UTK (-31), University of Nebraska (-27), Iowa State (-22), University of Colorado Boulder (-20), University of South Carolina (-20), Clemson University (-19), and Auburn University (-15)
- Social Mobility Rank
 - Increased in rank: Virginia Tech (132), Clemson University (55), Auburn University (52), and the University of Oklahoma (24)
 - Decreased in rank: University of Nebraska (-83), UTK (-62), and the University of Colorado Boulder (-35)
- Faculty Resources Rank
 - Increased in Rank: Iowa State (236), University of Nebraska (189), Clemson University (147), UTK (120), University of Missouri (108), and Virginia Tech (91)
 - Decreased in rank: None
- Faculty Compensation Rank
 - Increased in Rank: Iowa State (61), University of Nebraska (29), University of Missouri (25), and the University of Colorado Boulder (18)
 - Decreased in rank: Clemson University (-54), University of South Carolina (-49) and the University of Oklahoma (-43)
- Financial Resources Rank:
 - Increased in Rank: University of Oklahoma (8) and Auburn University (6)
 - Decreased in rank: University of South Carolina (-8), Virginia Tech (-7), and the University of Nebraska (-6)

Aspirational Peers

- National Universities Ranking
 - Increased in rank: Michigan State University (17), Penn State (17), NC State (12), and UTK (10)
 - Decreased in rank: None
- Public Universities Ranking
 - Increased in rank: Michigan State University (3), Penn State (3) and UTK (2)
 - Decreased in rank: University of Georgia (-4)
- Outcomes Rank
 - Increased in rank: Penn State (35)
 - Decreased in rank: UTK (-31), : Michigan State University (-15), Purdue University (-9), and the University of Illinois (-5)

- Social Mobility Rank
 - Increased in rank: University of Illinois (75), Purdue University (74) , NC State (72), University of Georgia (66), Penn State (61), and Michigan State University (51)
 - Decreased in rank: UTK (-62)
- Faculty Resources Rank
 - Increased in Rank: Michigan State University (205), Penn State (192), UTK (120), NC State (110), and Purdue University (67)
 - Decreased in rank: University of Georgia (-17)
- Faculty Compensation Rank
 - Increased in Rank: NC State (28), Michigan State University (26), Penn State (26), and Purdue University (10)
 - Decreased in rank: UTK (-8), and the University of Georgia (-3)
- Financial Resources Rank
 - Increased in Rank: Penn State (14)
 - Decreased in rank: Purdue University (-6) and the University of Georgia (-6)

SEC

- National Universities ranking
 - Increased in rank: Texas A&M (20) and UTK (10)
 - Decreased in rank: University of Alabama (-33), Mississippi State (-22), University of Kentucky (-22), University of Mississippi (-12), LSU (-9), and the University of South Carolina (-9)
- Public Universities ranking
 - Increased in rank: Texas A&M (6) and UTK (2)
 - Decreased in rank: University of Alabama (-27), University of Kentucky (-20), Mississippi State (-16), University of Mississippi (-16), LSU (-14), and the University of South Carolina (-11)
- Outcomes Rank
 - Increased in rank: None
 - Decreased in rank: UTK (-31), LSU (-29), University of Alabama (-29), University of Arkansas (-18), Mississippi State (-16), and Auburn University (-15)
- Social Mobility
 - Increased in rank: Vanderbilt University (104), Texas A&M (85), University of Georgia (66), Auburn University (52), University of Florida (28), and the University of Alabama (25)
 - Decreased in rank: Mississippi State (-63) and UTK (-62)

- Faculty Resources Rank
 - Increased in Rank: Texas A&M (277), UTK (120), University of Missouri (108), Mississippi State (73), Auburn University (62), University of Kentucky (62), University of Alabama (55), LSU (54), and the University of Arkansas (32)
 - Decreased in rank: University of Georgia (66) and the University of Florida (-13)
- Faculty Compensation Rank
 - Increased in Rank: University of Missouri (25), Auburn University (16), and the University of Kentucky (16)
 - Decreased in rank: University of Arkansas (-71), University of South Carolina (-49), University of Alabama (-26), Texas A&M (-19), and LSU (-17)
- Financial Resources Rank:
 - Increased in Rank: Auburn University (6), University of Florida (6), and Texas A&M (5)
 - Decreased in rank: University of Arkansas (-14), Vanderbilt University (-12), University of South Carolina (-8), and the University of Georgia (-6)

In the 2024 national rankings the University of Tennessee – Knoxville tied with nine other universities. The public institutions tied with UTK include Arizona State University, California State University--Long Beach, CUNY--City College, George Mason University, San Diego State University, and the University of Colorado Boulder. The private institutions that are tied with us are: American University, Saint Louis University, and Yeshiva University.