

Helping Your Campus Understand & Prioritize College Rankings

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EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

- **Public, 4-year university established in 1907; one of 17 institutions in the University of North Carolina system**
- **Carnegie Class: Doctoral, High Research Activity**
- **Offers 87 baccalaureate, 68 master's, 18 doctoral, & 2 specialist degree programs as well as 85 certificates**
- **In 2019-2020, conferred more than 7,500 degrees**
- **Fall 2020 enrollment: 28,798 (23,056 UG & 5,742 GR)**
- **All 100 counties in NC, 47 states + DC, and 99 countries represented in student body**
- **Over 7,000 employees; more than 2,000 of which are faculty**



Learning objectives: At the conclusion of this presentation, attendees should be able to:

- articulate the value of a campus-wide committee devoted to discussing and understanding college rankings and the surveys on which they are based;
- describe what is meant by a “Ranking Philosophy” statement and how such a statement can set a strategic direction for choosing the surveys in which a university participates and the rankings it emphasizes; and
- evaluate college ranking websites and organizations using a set of questions expressly developed for this purpose.

WHY A WORKING GROUP DEVOTED TO COLLEGE RANKINGS & RATINGS?



Although the importance/validity of college rankings is debated, they still capture the interest of university stakeholders, e.g., Board of Trustees.



Colleges/departments increasingly receiving notice of discipline rankings.



Proliferation of ranking/rating websites (many of dubious quality and/or owned by companies specializing in “student acquisition”)

COLLEGE GUIDE/RANKING PUBLICATION WORKING GROUP MEMBERSHIP

- Associate Provost, IPAR
- Director, IR
- Research Associate for External Reporting, IR
- Associate Provost, Enrollment Services
- Director, Graduate Admissions
- Associate Director, Continuing/Distance Education
- Director, Student Affairs Assessment
- Director, Creative Services (Marketing)
- Director, News & Communication
- And faculty/staff representation from:
 - Brody School of Medicine
 - College of Allied Health Sciences
 - College of Nursing
 - College of Business
 - College of Education



Prior to first meeting of group: Created a document outlining as many ranking/rating sources as possible with methodologies and where ECU stood on each

- Distinguished between ranking publications and guides as well as among ranking organization data sources

At first meeting:

- Introduced members to each other and to the “world” of rankings/ratings
- Explained the composition of the group and its charge
- Discussed frequency of meetings & future agenda topics

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- Review college guide/ranking publications to determine ECU participation or non-participation
- Articulate IPAR's and units' responsibilities in completing discipline-specific guide/ranking surveys
- Ensure that ECU's process and procedures for college guide/ranking publication survey participation are clear, consistent, and current (with a campus contact list and data standards)
- Outline a communications plan for publicizing ECU's rankings/ratings
- Identify areas that could negatively impact ECU's ratings/rankings and provide recommendations to administration

Our Ranking Philosophy

- College guides and rankings can be differentiated from one another by the data each collects and the process used for collecting that information.... The most reputable rankings are accompanied by detailed descriptions of methodologies and data sources.
- Guides and rankings can also be differentiated by the types and number of institutions evaluated.
- East Carolina University is particularly proud to achieve high rankings and recognitions that align with our mission to be a national model for student success, public service and regional transformation.

<https://ipar.ecu.edu/dashboards/dshbd-ranking-recognition/>

Ranking & Recognitions

[Our Ranking Philosophy](#)

[Rankings Main Page](#)

[More Complete Rankings, Rec...](#)



Our Ranking Philosophy

(Please see next two pages of this dashboard for ECU Rankings & Recognitions.)

This dashboard includes information about where ECU falls within some of the more well-known rankings, along with some notable recognitions of the university. Although guides and rankings may be useful tools in the college search process, they fall far short of portraying the full college experience. To determine if East Carolina University is the best fit for you, explore our website (www.ecu.edu) or, better yet, visit our campus (<https://admissions.ecu.edu/visit/>) to see ECU's mission of student access and success in action.

<https://ipar.ecu.edu/dashboards/dshbd-ranking-recognition/>



Rankings & Recognitions

(Please see more complete recognitions on the next page.)

Princeton Review

The Princeton Review surveyed 140,000 students from across the county to recognize the colleges which have the most accessible professors, best career services, and more.

Best 385
Colleges

Year of most recent ranking: 2019

U.S. News & World Report

Top Performers on Social Mobility

Top
15%
of schools
ranked

◆ 39 (tie) of 381 ◆

Year of most recent ranking: 2020

U.S. News & World Report

Best Online Master's
in Education Programs

U.S. News & World Report

Best Graduate Programs,
Occupational Therapy

National Council on Teacher Quality



Top 5% of schools ranked

Undergraduate Secondary Education Program, 96%ile

Top 25% of schools ranked

Undergraduate Special Education Programs, 12 (tie) of 93
Undergraduate Elementary Programs, 85%ile

Top 50% of schools ranked

Graduate and Alternative Route Elementary Programs, 56%ile



Year of most recent rankings:

2014 for Undergraduate Special Education; 2016 for Undergraduate Elementary; 2017 for Undergraduate Secondary Education Program; 2018 for Graduate and Alternative Route Elementary.

Princeton Review

Year of most recent review: 2019

ECU's Recognitions

Best 385 Colleges
Best Southeastern
Green Colleges



EVALUATING RANKING/RATING WEBSITES

• IS IT REPUTABLE?

- Who owns the site/ranking? Is it a single individual or a company? What are the credentials of the owner(s) or creator(s)?
- Does the site have a Privacy Policy and, if so, what information is provided in that policy relevant to the purpose of the site and its rankings? Is personal information collected that may be used in non-obvious ways? (For example, is there a “degree finder” on one or more pages indicating that the site is collecting “leads” to sell to others?)

• IS IT ACCURATE?

- Did ECU provide information/data to this organization/website, either directly or indirectly (e.g., IPEDS reporting)?
- How much information is given on the website about ECU and/or the program? What is the quality of that information?

• IS IT MEANINGFUL?

- What is the rankings methodology? Is it obvious that a great deal of thought went into creation of the methodology used?
- Do the rankings/ratings align with the mission of ECU or make sense for a given discipline?

Any questions?

Don't forget to complete the evaluation for this session: <http://bit.ly/sairsessions2020> THANK YOU!

PLPO03: Helping Your Campus Understand & Prioritize College Rankings

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