

**US News and World Report—Best Colleges Rankings 2013**  
 Summary Report to the Board of Trustees  
 September 2012

On September 12, 2012, *US News and World Report* (USNWR) released updated *Best Colleges* ranks. For the fourth consecutive year, Drake ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Midwest region of regional universities. Additional lists on which Drake appeared were the “Great Schools at Great Prices” list (10<sup>th</sup> in region) and “A+ Schools for B Students” (unranked list).

Overall Rank

For the second time since 2002, Drake is in sole possession of 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the region out of 147 institutions (table 1). As has been the case for the past three years, Creighton and Butler hold spots 1 and 2, respectively (table 2).

Table 1: Drake Historical Rankings

Year	Ranking
2013	3
2012	3
2011	3 (tied)
2010	3 (tied)
2009	5
2008	4 (tied)

Table 2: Top 5 in Midwest Region

Rank	
1	Creighton
2	Butler
3	<b>Drake</b>
4	Valparaiso
4	Xavier

Sub-Category Ranks

The components that contribute to *the US News and World Report* rankings are identified in table 3. On the two factors that contribute most to the overall score, Peer Assessment of Academic Quality and Graduation and Retention Rates, Drake’s position is unchanged in 2013. Drake’s ranking on Faculty Resources, Financial Resources and Alumni Giving all improved slightly. Drake’s Student Selectivity rank changed from second to third.

Table 3: Summary of *US News* Component Rankings

Evaluative Area	Percent item Contributes to Overall Ranking	Ranking 2013	Ranking 2012	Ranking 2011	Ranking 2010
Peer Assess. of Academic Quality	25%	3	3	2	2
Graduation and Retention Rate	25%	6	6	6	8
Faculty Resources	20%	5	7	29	24
Student Selectivity	15%	3	2	4	3
Financial Resources	10%	26	35	35	31
Alumni Giving	5%	35	40	40	33

**Peer Assessment**, as a single metric, accounts for the highest percentage of the overall rank (25%). Presidents, provosts, and directors of admission within each region are asked to rate other regional institutions’ academic programs on a scale from 1 (marginal) to 5 (distinguished). Drake’s peer assessment remained at 3.9 this year. It still ranks in the top 10 of more than 570 master’s institutions nationally.

Drake's **Graduation/Retention** rank remains consistent. This accounts for 25% of the composite score using the 3-year average Retention Rate (20%) and the 3-year average of 6-year Graduation Rates (80%). Drake University's graduation rate has improved steadily in recent years. Drake's six-year graduation rate for the 2013 report is 74%, up from 73% in 2012. Retention remained steady at 87%, giving Drake an overall rank of tied for 4<sup>th</sup> in our region.

Drake's **Faculty Resources** rank improved from 7<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> in our region (up from 29<sup>th</sup> in 2011). The Faculty Resource rank accounts for 20% of the composite score and is comprised of:

Percent of classes under 20 students	(30%)
Percent of classes with 50 or more students	(10%)
Faculty compensation	(35%)
Professors' highest degree	(15%)
Student-faculty ratio	(5%)
Percent of faculty full-time	(5%)

In Fall 2010 First Year Seminar sections were restricted to maximum enrollment of 19 students. This change was made with the intent of improving the *US News* score while understanding that there was no negative pedagogical impact. In addition, Drake has been able to increase faculty compensation at a time when many institutions have held even or instituted furloughs.

**Student Selectivity** - Drake moved down to 3<sup>rd</sup> best Student Selectivity rank in the Midwest region. The Student Selectivity rank accounts for 15% of an institution's composite score and includes:

SAT/ACT Test Scores	(50%)
First-year students in the top 10% of High School Class	(40%)
Acceptance rate	(10%)

Butler University's acceptance rate improved from 73% in the 2012 report to 61% in 2013, while Drake improved from 65% to 63% acceptance. This places the Butler rank higher on acceptance.

**Financial Resources** Drake showed dramatic improvement in the rankings, moving from 35<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> in our region. This is the highest ranking since 2008 (also 26<sup>th</sup> in that year). The Financial Resources rank accounts for 10% of composite score) and includes the 2-year average of per student spending on instruction, research, student services and related educational expenditures. Recent adjustments through Business and Finance allow us to now include amounts expended for research. The data used in this calculation does include athletics at some institutions if they classify these expenses within the IPEDS category of Student Services. At Drake, athletics is excluded from the Financial Resources calculation due to its status as an Auxiliary.

**Alumni Giving Rate** - Drake also improved in this category, moving from 40<sup>th</sup> to 35<sup>th</sup> in the region. This subscale accounts for 5% of the composite score and is based on the 2-year average of living alumni who received a bachelor's degree and gave to Drake in those years. One contributing factor is the successful efforts of the Distinctly Drake campaign to maintain participation rates (13% in 2012 *US News* data, 12% in 2013) when other institutions may experience a decline in giving rate.

#### Use of Results

A full analysis and peer comparison of the data elements used for the ranking categories will be prepared for the campus. In combination with other metrics (endowment level, tuition sticker price, financial aid measures, etc.) it will inform benchmarking and peer comparison processes.