

# Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### US News and World Report – Best Colleges Rankings 2019 September 10, 2018

On September 10<sup>th</sup>, *US News and World Report* (USNWR) released updated *Best Colleges* rankings. For the tenth consecutive year, Drake ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Midwest region of regional universities (n =172). Additional lists on which Drake appeared were “Best Value Schools” (17<sup>th</sup> in region), the “A+ Schools for B Students” (unranked list), “Undergraduate Business Programs” (172<sup>rd</sup> for Top Programs), “Best Colleges for Veterans” (2<sup>nd</sup> in region), 11<sup>th</sup> in our region on “Best Undergraduate Teaching,” and 4<sup>th</sup> in Most Innovative Schools. It is worth noting within “Academic Programs to Look For” Drake is mentioned for First-Year Experience.

We also were ranked for Graduate Schools. Notable rankings include #17 in Legal Writing, #24 in Rehabilitation Counseling, and #47 in Pharmacy.

#### Overall Rank

Drake retains its 3<sup>rd</sup> place rank in the region (table 1). This year Creighton and Butler tied for the number 1 spot.

Table 1: Drake Historical Rankings

2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Butler	Creighton	Creighton	Creighton	Creighton	Creighton	Creighton	Creighton
Creighton	Butler	Butler	Butler	Butler	Butler	Butler	Butler
Drake	Drake	Drake	Drake	Drake	Drake	Drake	Drake (tied)
John Carroll	Valpo	Valpo	Bradley	Xavier	Valpo	Valpo	Xavier
Valpo	Xavier	Xavier	Valpo	Bradley	Xavier	Xavier	Valpo

#### Sub-Category Ranks

The factors that contribute to the *US News and World Report* rankings are listed in table 2, along with Drake’s rank on each factor among institutions in the Midwest region. Please note that the percentage of contribution changed for 2019 for each of the sub-categories. Additionally, there is a change in verbiage from Student Selectivity to Student Excellence, as well as Peer Assessment to Expert Opinion. While Drake fell in many categories compared to last year, we maintained in Alumni Giving and improved in Faculty Resources.

Table 2: Summary of *US News* Component Rankings

Evaluative Area	Percent item Contributes to Overall Ranking	Ranking 2019	Ranking 2018	Ranking 2017	Ranking 2016	Ranking 2015	Ranking 2014
Expert Opinion	20%	3	3	3	3	3	3
Graduation and Retention Rate	27%	9	5	10	7	5	3
Faculty Resources	20%	4	6	7	12	6	9
Student Excellence	10%	3	2	3	2	2	2
Financial Resources	10%	8	7	7	9	15	22
Graduation Rate Performance	8%	N/A	N/A	N/A <sup>1</sup>	N/A	N/A	N/A
Alumni Giving	5%	29	29	35	33	37	37

US News continued with a very similar ranking methodology compared to last three years, which places less emphasis on inputs and more on outcome measures.

Drake's **Expert Opinion** was 3.9 again this year, which places Drake as tied for the 6<sup>th</sup> rank among 629 master's institutions nationally.

Drake's **Graduation/Retention** rank remains consistent. Drake's six-year graduation rate for the 2011 cohort is 79%. Table 3 provides longitudinal data on retention, predicted graduation rate, and six-year graduation rate. Included in this ranking are the graduation rates of Pell recipients and non-recipients and the difference between those two groups.

<sup>1</sup> Calculation has a ceiling effect for institutions with a high predicted graduation rate, negating the meaning of ranking.

Table 3

US News Reporting Year	Average First-year Retention Rate	Predicted Graduation Rate	Actual Graduation Rate
2019	88%	80% (11 cohort)	79%
2018	88%	78% (10 cohort)	78%
2017	88%	76% (09 cohort)	75%
2016	89%	76% (08 cohort)	78%
2015	86%	75% (07 cohort)	73%

Drake’s **Faculty Resources** rank is 4<sup>th</sup> in our region. The Faculty Resource rank is comprised of: class size index (proportion of undergraduate classes with <20, 20-29, 30-39, and 40-49 students), faculty compensation, proportion of faculty with the highest degree in the field, student-faculty ratio, and proportion of full-time faculty.

**Student Excellence** - Drake placed 3<sup>rd</sup> best on the Student Excellence rank in the Midwest region. The Student Excellence rank includes: SAT/ACT test scores (25<sup>th</sup> – 75<sup>th</sup> percentile = 24 – 30), first-year students in the top 25% of High School Class (66%), and first-year students in the top 10% of High School Class (38%). These indicators are slightly different from last year, as admit rate is not included and top 10% is.

**Financial Resources** - Drake moved to 8<sup>th</sup> place in our region this year. The Financial Resources rank includes the 2-year average of per student spending on instruction, research, student services and related educational expenditures.

**Graduation Rate Performance** – Drake underperformed by 1 percent to US News’ expectations on its graduation rate (expected 80%, actual 79%). This scale measures the difference between the six-year graduation rate for the Fall 2011 cohort and US News’ predicted graduation rate. Ranking institutions based on the magnitude of the difference between predicted and actual graduation rate is difficult, given the variable nature of the predicted rates (which range from 63% – 83% for the top ten ranked schools).

**Alumni Giving Rate** - Drake remained at 29<sup>th</sup> in the region this year. This subscale is based on the 2-year average of living alumni who received a bachelor’s degree and gave to Drake (12% - same as previous three years).