



# Analytics

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The 2010 ranking of 610 four year degree granting institutions of higher education from Forbes and the Center for College Affordability and Productivity is out. How did the University of Delaware fare?

The Forbes rankings of “America’s Best Colleges” are based upon output measures such as post-graduate success, competitive awards, and the four-year graduation rate. The University of Delaware ranks 218. It is necessary to put this ranking in context.

As with other large public universities, Delaware is a land grant institution with a broader mission than most private institutions. Not surprisingly, the highest ranked institutions in Delaware’s region are private, including: Princeton (#2), Swarthmore (#7), Haverford (#14), University of Pennsylvania (#36), Bryn Mawr (#38), and Johns Hopkins (#88).

More relevant is how the U of D compares to the major public institutions in surrounding states: University of Maryland, College Park (#249); Penn State, University Park (#192), and Rutgers University, New Brunswick (#366). The variations in the U of D ranking relative to these institutions across the five general categories of performance applied is interesting.

**POST-GRAD SUCCESS:** Post graduate success is measured by the salaries of alumni, the listing of alumni in *Who’s Who in America*, and the alumni listed as corporate officers by Forbes. The U of D finishes last among the four schools on this measure.

**COMPETITIVE AWARDS:** This includes the number of nationally competitive awards received by students such as the Rhodes Scholarship, the British Marshall Scholarship, the Harry S. Truman Scholarship, and National Science Foundation Fellowships. Here the U of D ranks an impressive first.

**STUDENT SATISFACTION:** This performance category is based upon student evaluations from *RateMyProfessor.com* and from *MyPlan.com*, and freshman to sophomore retention rates. Delaware finishes a close second here.

Finally, the U of D performs the best on **STUDENT DEBT**, including loan default rates, and ranks second on the **FOUR YEAR GRADUATION RATE**.

So, while a ranking of 218 does not appear stellar, the U of D performs quite well when compared to similar land grant institutions in the region.

Rankings are very qualitative and vary substantially depending upon the measures chosen and the weights given to those measures. For example, the difference between the U of D’s composite score

**(49.9) and the score of the 100th ranked institution (58.3) is modest. Nevertheless, the U of D can take some satisfaction from the Forbes analysis.**

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