

FSU climbs Forbes' Top Colleges List

Alex Burnham, Staff Writer 6:41 p.m. EDT July 20, 2016



(Photo: Mike Ewen/Democrat)

In the most recent list of *America's Top Colleges*, Florida State University climbed to No. 44 among public universities and No. 177 overall. Forbes recently released the new rankings which are based on a set of 12 factors, including student satisfaction, post-graduate success and student debt. In addition to placing in the top 50 for public universities, Florida State ranked No. 33 among colleges in the South and No. 82 among research universities.

The new ranking surpasses Florida State's position on last year's Forbes list, moving up six places from No. 50. Forbes also placed Florida State University at No. 2 within the State University System of Florida, which is comprised of universities such as Florida Atlantic University, University of Florida and University of South

Florida.

After the rankings were released, Florida State University President John Thrasher remarked that the recent list of *America's Top Colleges* "provides further evidence of Florida State University's rise in national prominence."

Florida State boasts several nationally accredited programs and departments, such as the College of Criminology and Criminal Justice, which has been ranked No. 1 for faculty research among all criminology and criminal justice programs.

According to the University, faculty and about 25 percent of FSU undergraduate students currently conduct out-of-class research, with many more participating within the classroom. In the next four years, overall engagement is projected to reach 100 percent with the implementation of current curricular initiatives.

Florida State University maintains a 92 percent freshman retention rate, a 26:1 student-faculty ratio and the 2015 title of "most beautiful campus," from interior decorating magazine *House Beautiful*.



FSU boasts a 92 percent freshmen retention rate. (Photo: Joe Rondone/Democrat)

"The Forbes national ranking reflects our efforts this year on a number of fronts to elevate academic excellence to an even higher level and to ensure our students are as well-equipped as any in the country to find the best jobs when they graduate," added President Thrasher.

In 2014 and 2015, *INSIGHT Into Diversity* Magazine named Florida State University a recipient of the "Higher Education Excellence in Diversity" (HEED) Award for its commitment to and continued efforts for diversity and inclusion. The magazine recognized FSU as one of seven "Diversity Champion" colleges and universities around the nation.

The FSU College of Medicine has an enrollment percentage for black or African-American students double the national average and is the only institution within the Association of American Medical Colleges (made up of 136 U.S. medical schools) to be ranked in the top six for enrollment of both black and Hispanic students.



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In 2015, the Washington D.C.-based Council on Undergraduate Research selected Florida State as one of six research-university finalists for the inaugural Award for Undergraduate Research Accomplishments (AURA).

Research opportunities at Florida State provide access to advanced programs and innovative technology, as well work with highly recognized faculty and decorated staff. The Engineering campus—home to the combined Florida A&M University and Florida State University Engineering program—contains the National High Magnetic Field Laboratory: The state of Florida's only national lab, which holds records for the most powerful magnets on Earth.

In addition to student satisfaction and educational opportunities, Forbes takes into account the success of alumni from each respective university when calculating who sits at the top of *America's Top Colleges*. All three Rhodes Scholars from public universities in Florida since 2006 have come from Florida State University, and seven faculty scholars from FSU were awarded Fulbright grants for 2015-2016, which is tied for third among the nation's research institutions.

Other notable alumni include Sara Blakely, one of the world's youngest female self-made billionaires and founder of Spanx; three-time World Series Champion and Catcher for the San Francisco Giants, Buster Posey; musicians Jim Morrison, Jake Owen and Rita Coolidge; former Florida Governor Charlie Crist and renowned actor Burt Reynolds.

The University's rise in the Forbes list of *Top Colleges* seems to be a reflection of the pursuits and achievements of Florida State's students, faculty and alumni. The new developments and future plans for Florida State will seek to cultivate a similar dedication to excellence, as University officials and Florida State staff believe the University has the potential and the resources to rise even further in Forbes' ranks.

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