






Your Impact On Higher Education Can Be Measured

Does your state provide an intellectually rich, high-quality college education at an affordable price?

See how your state performs compared to others.

			STATE RANK
	Tuition as a % of Median Household Income	13.58%	20 th
	Administrative Spending Per Student	\$3,091	17 th
	Core Curriculum	1.30	36 th
	Speech Code Policies	2.50	6 th
	4-Year Graduation Rate	40.08%	32 nd

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Notes

Unless otherwise indicated, data from this survey include all public four-year doctoral, master's, and bachelor's degree-granting institutions in the United States. ACTA's survey does not include two-year institutions or those with a vocational, technical, or otherwise narrow mission focus. Data are drawn from the National Center for Education Statistics' (NCES) Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) unless otherwise specified.



Tuition as a % of Median Household Income

Percentages are calculated by dividing what institutions report to IPEDS as "published in-state tuition and fees" by the state median household income reported by the American Community Survey. Dollar values are inflation-adjusted using the CPI-U-RS annual average. Values are based on weighted averages using undergraduate enrollment ("reported full-time equivalent (FTE) undergraduate enrollment") so that schools that serve a larger percentage of students within the state contribute more to the state's average. Higher rankings correspond with lower percentages.



Administrative Spending Per Student

Spending amounts are calculated using what institutions report to IPEDS as "institutional support" expenses, or those for the "day-to-day operational support of the institution." Institutional support commonly includes costs for executive management, legal department, fiscal operations, public relations, and development. To calculate this on a per-student basis, the total state spending is divided by the "full-time equivalent enrollment (fall enrollment derivation)" variable reported in IPEDS. Higher rankings correspond with lower amounts of per-student spending.



Core Curriculum

The Core Curriculum ranking is determined using ACTA's What Will They Learn?® (WWTL) project, which grades colleges and universities on an "A"–"F" scale based on how many of seven core subjects are required in their general education programs. To calculate a state's average, the Core Curriculum ranking converts the WWTL grades to numerical values using the standard college GPA system (A = 4.0, B = 3.0, etc.). Values are weighted by undergraduate enrollment. Higher rankings correspond with more curricular requirements.



Speech Code Policies

The Speech Code ranking is based on the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression's (FIRE) Spotlight Database, which assigns a "red light" / "yellow light" / "green light" rating to institutions based on the extent to which their policies restrict free speech. To calculate a state's average ranking, ACTA converts FIRE's ratings to numerical values (1 = "red light," most restrictive; 3 = "green light," least restrictive) and weights each institution's score by undergraduate enrollment. This ranking is reflective of institutions' written policies, not necessarily their practices. Higher rankings correspond with less restrictive speech codes.



4-Year Graduation Rate

The 4-Year Graduation Rate ranking uses data drawn from the NCES College Navigator website for first-time, full-time freshmen pursuing bachelor's degrees. The state ranking is created by averaging each school's graduation rate weighted by undergraduate enrollment. Higher rankings correspond with higher graduation rates.

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