

BEST MICROBREWS | FALL STYLE SPECIAL

SEATTLE

METROPOLITAN

NORTHWEST

College Rankings 2008



OCTOBER 2008
\$4.99 www.seattlemet.com



A wine lover's
kayak tour through
the Yakima Valley

Tim Eyman
hopes to change lanes
with I-985

African American
Museum: Whose story
does it tell?

BY STEFAN DURHAM AND
MATTHEW HALVERSON

RESEARCH BY
JESSICA CAMPBELL
AND MEGAN CLARK

NORTHWEST COLLEGE RANKINGS 2008

RANKING COLLEGES is almost as difficult as picking one to attend, but the **BIGGEST MISTAKE** you can make in either case is allowing yourself to be swayed by **GOOD PR.** “Where to go to college has nothing to do with the size of a school’s **FOOTBALL TEAM** or how often they appear on television,” says Bob Mahmoudi, president of advising firm College Planning Solutions. “Not that those don’t matter, but they shouldn’t be impacting **DECISIONS** about where to go.”

So when ranking the top **39 SCHOOLS** in the Northwest, we focused on the qualities that, taken together, have an effect on not only the **COLLEGE EXPERIENCE** but everything that comes after it: How involved in the **COMMUNITY** are the students? How likely are they to give to their alma mater after graduating? (And by extension, how much did they like their alma mater?) How **HAPPY** are they with the education they got and where it took them in life?

Yes, we factored in numbers that favor **HIGHFALUTIN** bastions of book learnin’, too, but this list is for those who are more interested in how the whole package adds up (whether prospective students, anxious parents of the same, or proud alums) than just a **DIPLOMA** from a prestigious institution.

We ranked our colleges according to eight variables, giving double weight to sophomore retention rates as reported by the schools, student satisfaction with academics as measured by the survey Web site StudentsReview.com, and overall scores from *U.S. News*’ “Best Colleges 2009” report. Average SAT and GPA scores of entering freshmen, percentages of work-study funds going to community service, student satisfaction ratings of campus social life (from StudentsReview.com), and alumni giving rates all received single weighting. In order to ensure that each variable, respective of its assigned weight, contributed evenly to our final average scores, we adjusted all data sets to have a mean of two and a standard deviation of two (following a four-point scale). Though all efforts were made to fill out each data set as completely as possible, some schools do not track or were occasionally unable to disclose some figures.

NORTHWEST COLLEGE RANKINGS 2008



1. WHITMAN COLLEGE

Walla Walla, Washington
Founded 1882
Undergrad enrollment 1,452
Tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$32,670 / \$22,805
Applicants / Freshman class size / Sophomore retention rate 2,047 / 425 / 90 percent
Average SAT+ / GPA of incoming freshmen 620-730, 620-700, 610-700 / 3.8
Diversity 22 percent
Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 4.1 years
Alumni giving rate 50 percent

If you can get in, Whitman might be one of the best schools for all-around college experience in the Northwest—*college* being the operative word. The school's president vows Whitman will never become a university. Nine out of 10 undergrads who make it through their sophomore year stay to graduate, and student satisfaction numbers bear that out: Whitman is ranked ninth for classroom experience and 12th for quality of life by the PrincetonReview.com. The Greek system is huge (34 percent of guys join frats and 29 percent of girls pledge sororities). And for all their hard work, students reward themselves with the annual end-of-school Beer Mile in Ankeny Field.



2. UNIVERSITY OF PORTLAND

Portland, Oregon
Founded 1901
Undergrad enrollment 2,967
Tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$29,400 / \$24,516

Applicants / Freshman class size / Sophomore retention rate 4,196 / 805 / 93 percent

Average SAT / GPA of incoming freshmen 530-640, 540-640, NA / 3.7

Diversity 17 percent

Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 4 years

Alumni giving rate 16 percent

The College Board, which oversees the ever-controversial SAT test, recently issued a report showing that the University of Portland is the private school that Oregon students most often picked to receive their standardized test scores. Little wonder, then, that when students gain admission to this competitive Roman Catholic institution, they tend to stay. A high retention rate, picturesque campus, and strong programs in subjects like engineering, nursing, and business may contribute to its regional allure, but this school's bragging rights go beyond academics: UP has also pulled in top-notch coaches and attracted sporty kids with its superlative soccer program, which has produced two women's national championship teams and several international male stars over the past decade. Well-known UP alumni include *Clan of the Cave Bear* author Jean Auel and U.S. Women's soccer star Tiffeny Milbrett.



3. REED COLLEGE

Portland, Oregon
Founded 1908
Undergrad enrollment 1,492
Tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$37,960 / \$32,154
Applicants / Freshman class size / Freshman retention rate ‡ 3,365 / 347 / 91 percent
Average SAT‡ / GPA of incoming freshmen 680-760, 630-710, 650-730 / 3.9
Diversity‡ 25 percent

Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 4.2 years

Alumni giving rate* 28 percent

Reedies are nerds, but we say that with love: Passionate about testing their cranial limits, students here have earned 31 Rhodes and 63 Fulbright scholarships, 108 National Science Foundation Fellowships, and 53 Guggenheim Fellowships, and two graduates have gone on to win Pulitzer Prizes. Famous dropouts James Beard and Steve Jobs got quirky kick-starts at this school, where hard-working students like to have fun with knowledge, hosting week-long seminars between fall and spring semesters on everything from Scotch tasting to the declining American psyche as expressed in *The Sopranos*. Sports are nearly nonexistent, but that doesn't mean extracurricular activities are; mind expansion, thanks to a seemingly lax attitude toward hallucinogens, is a popular hobby (work hard, play hard, right?). Did we mention they study a lot?



4. GONZAGA UNIVERSITY

Spokane, Washington
Founded 1887
Undergrad enrollment 4,386
Tuition / Average amount of financial aid* \$27,820 / \$20,127
Applicants / Freshman class size / Freshman retention rate 5,023 / 1,100 / 91 percent
Average SAT / GPA of incoming freshmen 530-640, 540-650, NA / 3.7
Diversity 15 percent
Average time to obtain bachelor's degree‡ 5.3 years
Alumni giving rate 27 percent
 There's no Greek system at this Jesuit university, but the students still make philanthropy a priority, logging more than 100,000 hours of community service every year; some even [gasp!]

spend spring break working in low-income neighborhoods. Don't want to work for the Man? Gonzaga puts an emphasis on small-business ownership through its Hogan Entrepreneurial Leadership Program, and the school's laureled debate team prepares students for real-life quid pro quo. In the category of "Where did they come from?" Gonzaga's basketball team has gone from a nobody to one of only four schools in the country with 10 straight NCAA tournament berths; student fans of the Zags join the Kennel Club to cheer (and drink).



5. WILLAMETTE UNIVERSITY

Salem, Oregon
Founded 1842
Undergrad enrollment 1,900
Tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$33,750 / \$27,209
Applicants / Freshman class size / Sophomore retention rate 4,241 / 490 / 90 percent
Average SAT / GPA of incoming freshmen 570-690, 550-660, 550-660 / 3.8
Diversity 18 percent
Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 4 years
Alumni giving rate 29 percent
 Willamette is the oldest university in the Northwest, but that doesn't mean it's old school; the modern and sustainable Kaneko Commons residence hall is a new option for the nearly two-thirds of students who live on campus. Classes are considered rigorous without being competitive; biology and political science are popular fields of study, and Boeing CEO Jim Albaugh, former Oregon Governor Mark Hatfield, and erstwhile Senator Bob Packwood round out Willamette's impressive alumni roster. Mill Stream cuts through campus, adding to the school's outdoorsy

Numbers for the following are the most recent available and are taken from the 2007-08 academic or calendar year unless otherwise noted: undergrad enrollment, tuition, average amount of financial aid, applicants, freshman class size, sophomore retention rate (or "junior persistence," the percentage of 2005 freshmen who remained enrolled in 2007-08; freshman retention rates are reported when sophomore rates were unavailable), average SAT scores (reading, math, and writing scores are listed unless otherwise noted), grade point averages of incoming freshmen, and diversity (percent nonwhite students). Figures were reported by the schools unless noted as follows: * U.S. News and World Report "Best Colleges 2009" [colleges.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/college] + The Princeton Review [princetonreview.com] ‡ National Center for Education Statistics [nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator] § University and College Accountability Network [ucan-network.org] * "NA" means data not available.



For more on *Seattle Metropolitan's* Northwest college rankings, tune in on September 25 for Mark Wright's report on Q13 FOX News This Morning, Q13 FOX News at 9pm and 10pm, and on the Web at Q13FOX.com

aesthetic, offering an obstacle over which to "slackline" (see page 78), and serving as the official dunking spot for birthday boys and girls. Salem isn't necessarily an active town, forcing kids here to "make their own fun," as one grad told us; they do, through groups like the Outdoor Club. Hungry students look forward to Midnight Breakfast during finals week.

6. MULTNOMAH UNIVERSITY

Portland, Oregon

Founded 1936

Undergrad enrollment 567

Tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$14,100 / \$3,258

Applicants / Freshman class size / Sophomore retention rate 377 / 203 / NA

Average SAT / GPA of incoming freshmen* 520, 536, 523 / 3.5

Diversity 9 percent

Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 5 years

Alumni giving rate 39 percent

Multnomah University may not be for everyone, but it doesn't pretend to be. Underscoring its only two degree programs (Bible Studies and General Education) with its motto, "If it's the Bible you want, then you want Multnomah," the school is sanctuary to students who prefer to make the Good Book their main college text. In spite of the school's narrow focus—or maybe because of it—Multnomah pulls in a geographically diverse crowd; almost 50 percent of its students come from out of state. And 39 percent of its adoring alumni (among whom number a few successful Christian authors as well as pinup vixen Bettie Page) have made financial contributions to their alma mater.



7. PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY

Tacoma, Washington

Founded 1880

Undergrad enrollment 3,349

Tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$25,088 / \$11,000

Applicants / Freshman class size / Sophomore retention rate 2,139 / 715 / 73 percent

Average SAT (combined reading and math) / GPA of incoming freshmen 1107 / 3.6

Diversity 28 percent

Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 4 years

Alumni giving rate 13 percent

Student satisfaction at PLU is split right down the academics/social life line; most current and former students adore the educational climate on campus but don't find much recreational inspiration in Tacoma's Parkland neighborhood. Fortunately, the school's Sojourner program places as many as 400 students in study-abroad courses on all seven continents each year. Professors have a good reputation on campus; one student told us that her communications professor happily contributed to two documentaries she produced. PLU has no Greek system, but dorm residents know how to party; annual school-sanctioned soirees at each dorm, including the traditionally raucous Fossfest, are bright spots for nightlife-starved coeds; however, the school's administration has been trying to crack down on some of the bigger parties of late.



8. UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

Seattle, Washington

Founded 1861

Undergrad enrollment 28,570

In-state tuition / Out-of-state tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$6,385 / \$22,131 / \$11,200

Applicants / Freshman class size / Sophomore retention rate 20,000 / 5,500 / 95 percent

Average SAT† / GPA of incoming freshmen 530–650, 560–670, 520–630 / 3.7

Diversity 30 percent

Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 4.4 years

Alumni giving rate 18 percent

Size matters at UW. There's the undergrad enrollment, which at close to 29,000 is the biggest in both Washington and Oregon. There's the number of alumni who join the Peace Corps, which has been the highest in the country for two years. The library even has a copy of the

world's biggest book (seven-foot-tall *Bhutan*). Most impressive, though, is the breadth of the university's academic offerings, with subjects like speech and hearing sciences, creative writing, biology, information sciences, and psychology topping its diverse array of standout programs. And UW has gone green in a big way, reducing its energy use since 2000, which landed it in *Sierra* magazine's recent list of the top 10 green colleges in the country. The school's rigorous academics have produced their fair share of world-shakers, among whom the school counts several Nobel Laureates and scores of Washington household names (Christine Gregoire, William and Mary Gates, Beverly Cleary, and...Kenny G). Award-winning student groups like the Foundation for International Understanding through Students and the Earth Club are prominent, while the ever-popular Bruce Lee Dedication Group is lately petitioning the school to erect a bronze statue of the martial arts master and onetime UW attendee.



9. WHITWORTH UNIVERSITY

Spokane, Washington

Founded 1890

Undergrad enrollment 2,331

Tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$25,382 / \$13,665

Applicants / Freshman class size / Sophomore retention rate 5,060 / 537 / 83 percent

Average SAT‡ / GPA of incoming freshmen 550–650, 560–650, 540–640 / 3.7

Diversity 14 percent

Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 4.2 years

Alumni giving rate 23 percent

Whitworth prides itself on its Presbyterian traditions, championing "the Big Three" (no alcohol or drugs, no cohabitation, no disturbing the peace); students who come here typically share those values. Those who do cut loose often spend time at the Motherland, a "counterculture" off-campus house nicknamed for its willingness to embrace international students accustomed to a younger drinking age. Ultimate frisbee is

practically de rigueur at Whitworth, as at a lot of schools in the Northwest, but this college may be the only one that features "Braveheart" ultimate frisbee, in which combatants paint their faces and bodies blue and wear nothing more than a towel. Regardless of what they do outside of class, students enjoy close relationships with profs and administrators, even affectionately calling President Bill Robinson, "B. Rob." The relaxed milieu apparently didn't slow down 1969 alum and local journalist Ross H. Anderson, who shared the 1990 Pulitzer Prize in journalism for his *Seattle Times* article on the Exxon Valdez spill.



10. SEATTLE UNIVERSITY

Seattle, Washington

Founded 1891

Undergrad enrollment 4,253

Tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$26,325 / \$21,771

Applicants / Freshman class size / Sophomore retention rate 4,923 / 768 / 76 percent

Average SAT / GPA of incoming freshmen 520–640, 530–630, 510–620 / 3.6

Diversity 35 percent

Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 4 years

Alumni giving rate 14 percent

Seattle U is a Jesuit school and, yes, it upholds the church's core values of lifelong scholarship, community involvement, and devotion to God, Jesus, and the Sacred Heart. But less than half of the students are Catholic and—come on, the campus is on Capitol Hill—the atmosphere is anything but conservative (notable alum Duff McKagan, former bassist for Guns N' Roses, withstanding). Although it had operated in UW's shadow for years, administrators point out that both the school and the surrounding neighborhood are going through considerable transformations, from continuing development along 12th Avenue to increasing awareness of its nursing and software engineering programs. The work may be paying off: *U.S. News and World Report* ranked Seattle U sixth among MBA and law universities in the west this year. The

sports programs are in the process of returning to NCAA Division I status after three decades in Division II.



11. WALLA WALLA UNIVERSITY

Walla Walla, Washington

Founded 1892

Undergrad enrollment 1,611

Tuition / Average amount of financial aid† \$21,114 / \$18,550

Applicants‡ / Freshman class size‡ / Sophomore retention rate 903 / 347 / 71 percent

Average SAT (combined) / GPA of incoming freshmen 1577 / 3.0

Diversity 21 percent

Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 5.1 years

Alumni giving rate* 28 percent

Walla Walla is affiliated with the Seventh-day Adventist church, meaning that dorms are not coed, the cafeteria serves only vegetarian food, and drinking is outlawed on campus. Students who've rated the school on StudentsReview.com seem okay with the restrictions, though, giving Walla Walla an A for its social life. More than 60 percent of attendees come from out of state; perhaps because there are only three other Seventh-day Adventist schools west of Nebraska, and they're all in California. Nursing, engineering, and biology programs are considered the strongest of the school's offerings; the last requires students to spend at least one summer studying at the school's marine lab near Anacortes.



12. WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Bellingham, Washington

Founded 1893

Undergrad enrollment 12,538

In-state tuition‡ / Out-of-state tuition‡ / Average amount of financial aid† \$5,291 / \$16,365 / \$9,709

Applicants / Freshman class size‡ / Sophomore retention rate 9,516 / 2,650 / 91 percent

Average SAT‡ / GPA of incoming freshmen 490-610, 500-610, 480-590 / 3.5

Diversity 17 percent

Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 4.6 years

Alumni giving rate 9 percent

After 11 years of being ranked second in the west among public masters-degree-granting universities by *U.S. News and World Report*, WWU slipped this year—to third. The school's undergrad education, psychology, and accounting programs regularly get nods for their academic rigor and excellent faculty, and groups like the Ethnic Student Center, the Inn Campus Ministries, and Students for Renewable Energy exemplify the kind of diversity that's embraced by the university's close-knit student community (much of which tends to stick around Bellingham after graduation). Students everywhere gripe about fees, but the kids at WWU actually pushed for a quarterly transportation fee in 2007 to pay for year-round bus passes. *Public Art Review* ranked WWU's outdoor sculpture garden among the 10 best in the country in 2006. Students are known for taking advantage of all the snow in Bellingham by stealing plastic trays from the cafeteria and using them as sleds. Notable alumni include Pictionary creator Rob Angel and Northwest indie-rock supergroup Death Cab for Cutie.



13. UNIVERSITY OF PUGET SOUND

Tacoma, Washington

Founded 1888

Undergrad enrollment 2,527

Tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$33,780 / \$21,264

Applicants / Freshman class size‡ / Sophomore retention rate 4,289 / 644 / 86 percent

Average SAT‡ / GPA of incoming freshmen 570-690, 550-660, 560-660 / 3.5

Diversity 19 percent

Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 4.1 years

Alumni giving rate 19 percent

UPS's mascot—the Logger—screams "American frontier," and former attendees Rick Steves and Dale Chihuly anchor UPS's alumni community firmly in the Northwest. But the school's strong focus on the

Pacific Rim also says "international awareness"; almost one-third of students take a course in Asian studies. Throw in the facts that one out of five students is not white and more than 60 percent come from out of state, and you've got a campus with an impressive range of ethnic, cultural, and geographic diversity. Proximity to Seattle and Portland gives students with an itch to travel options for a change of scenery, but those who stay on campus find plenty to do in their Tudor Gothic enclave. And then there's the obsession with the Hatchet, an old carpenter's tool that has taken on mythical status [see "Obscure Objects of Desire," page 75].



14. LEWIS AND CLARK COLLEGE

Portland, Oregon

Founded 1867

Undergrad enrollment 1,964

Tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$33,490 / \$23,801

Applicants / Freshman class size‡ / Sophomore retention rate 5,351 / 507 / 85 percent

Average SAT / GPA of incoming freshmen 610-700, 590-680, 590-680 / 3.7

Diversity 13 percent

Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 4.1 years

Alumni giving rate 25 percent

Lewis and Clark might best be labeled a commuter school—but not in that way: Thanks to foreign language and international studies requirements, half of the students study abroad in places like China, Cuba, and Africa. A haven for born arguers (*U.S. News and World Report* has ranked its environmental law program first in the country eight times since 1997, and the debate team is a perennial powerhouse), it also has a reputation for being something of a destination school for predominantly left-leaning, outdoorsy types—79 percent of students come from out of state. Intramural sports like ultimate Frisbee are popular, as are women's soccer, men's baseball, and men's and women's crew. Every spring, Lewis and Clark's more adventurous

students celebrate Earth Day by running the Naked Mile through campus.



15. UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

Eugene, Oregon

Founded 1876

Undergrad enrollment 16,681

In-state tuition / Out-of-state tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$6,036 / \$18,792 / \$8,682

Applicants / Freshman class size‡ / Sophomore retention rate 11,287 / 3,587 / 75 percent

Average SAT‡ / GPA of incoming freshmen 486-606, 496-611, NA / 3.5

Diversity 15 percent

Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 4.6 years

Alumni giving rate 17 percent

Eugene residents have a reputation for being laid-back hippies, but as the flagship school of the Oregon public university system, U of O lays claim to some of the state's hardest-working faculty and students. A pantheon of famous alumni testify to the rigor of standout departments like the school of journalism (which produced novelist Chuck Palahniuk), and school of architecture (from which 2 Columbus Circle architect Brad Cloepfil arose). Students rank the campus the most beautiful in the country on StudentsReview.com, and athletes enjoy some of the finest facilities in the country, thanks in large part to the fact that Nike founder Phil Knight is a graduate and patron. Need a laugh? Frog, a bearded local who's been hanging out near the U of O bookstore forever, will be happy to sell you one of his books of "the funniest jokes you've ever heard."



16. SEATTLE PACIFIC UNIVERSITY

Seattle, Washington

Founded 1891

Undergrad enrollment 3,038

Tuition / Average amount of financial aid† \$24,743 / \$20,988

Applicants / Freshman class size‡

22. WARNER PACIFIC COLLEGE

Portland, Oregon
Founded 1937
Undergrad enrollment 651
Tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$16,000 / \$10,720
Applicants / Freshman class size / Sophomore retention rate 605 / 150 / 52 percent
Average SAT* / GPA of incoming freshmen 440-540, 428-543, 438-563 / 3.0
Diversity 17 percent
Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 4 years
Alumni giving rate 9 percent
 Nearly 40 percent of students at this Church of God-affiliated liberal arts college major in human development and family studies. Visitors to StudentsReview.com give the quality of the school's academics an A-, but they also make it clear that unless you want to be a teacher, pastor, or social worker, this might not be the school for you. The men's basketball program has come on strong of late, making it to the Sweet 16 in last season's NAIA Division II tournament. As might be expected, religion and theology classes are required.



23. OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY

Corvallis, Oregon
Founded 1858
Undergrad enrollment 16,228
In-state tuition / Out-of-state tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$6,187 / \$18,823 / \$9,022
Applicants* / Freshman class size* / Sophomore retention rate 8,149 / 3,089 / 90 percent
Average SAT / GPA of incoming freshmen 460-580, 490-610, NA / 3.5
Diversity 20 percent
Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 4.4 years
Alumni giving rate* 15 percent
 Given its location in western Oregon, it probably doesn't come as a surprise that forestry, agricultural sciences, and conservation biology have become OSU's calling cards, but don't overlook its business or engineering programs. Students may not be as bohemian as their

counterparts at the University of Oregon, but that doesn't mean they don't like to party. And thanks to success over the years on the court and the field, they love their sports; the annual "Civil War" face-off with U of O is a smashmouth event that amplifies school spirit in Corvallis, which has a decidedly college-town feel. And they like to give back: More than 1,100 Oregon State students have served in the Peace Corps.



24. EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE

Olympia, Washington
Founded 1971
Undergrad enrollment 4,586
In-state tuition / Out-of-state tuition / Average amount of financial aid* \$5,342 / \$15,462 / \$11,398
Applicants / Freshman class size / Sophomore retention rate 1,806 / 686 / 77 percent
Average SAT± / GPA of incoming freshmen 520-640, 460-590, NA / 3.1
Diversity 18 percent
Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 4 years
Alumni giving rate 8 percent
 "Nontraditional" doesn't quite sum up the student body at Evergreen, whose motto, *Omnia extares*, translates to "Let it all hang out." Try "unique in a scary-smart, hippie commune kind of way" instead: Grades are replaced by written evaluations, students take a DIY approach to the curriculum, and sustainable living is a hot topic (*Sierra* magazine ranked it fifth in the country on its recent list of green campuses). Environmental research is a popular program, but Evergreen's family studies department has earned the school the most ink: Professor Stephanie Coontz has kvetched about the subject on Oprah's couch and offers sound bites to the press more often than James Carville during an election year. Campus life is equally nontraditional here at the southern end of Puget Sound, where Frisbee and competitive coffee-drinking are about as active as it gets, but students will occasionally escape to Seattle.



25. LINFIELD COLLEGE

McMinnville, Oregon
Founded 1858
Undergrad enrollment 2,522
Tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$25,390 / \$16,275
Applicants / Freshman class size / Sophomore retention rate 2,050 / 476 / 74 percent
Average SAT / GPA of incoming freshmen 490-610, 500-610, 460-580 / 3.6
Diversity 13 percent
Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 4.2 years
Alumni giving rate 18 percent
 Located in the rolling hills of western Oregon, Linfield's main campus gets props for its Northeast-in-the-Northwest feel. It gets bigger props for its international studies program: Half of its students spend at least a semester abroad, and the Institute of International Education ranked Linfield 11th nationally among baccalaureate institutions for participation in study-abroad programs during the 2005-06 school year. Those who stick around campus benefit from small class sizes and point to easily accessible professors as a big plus; one student told us professors routinely hold study sessions at their homes the night before final exams. Learn to love sports: Linfield alum and '98 World Series MVP Scott Brosius brings coaching cachet to the Wildcats baseball team, and fans of the powerhouse football program drag couches to Maxwell Field to watch games from the end zones.



26. PACIFIC UNIVERSITY

Forest Grove, Oregon
Founded 1849
Undergrad enrollment 1,452
Tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$27,604 / \$22,706
Applicants / Freshman class size / Sophomore retention rate 1,258 / 372 / 80 percent
Average SAT / GPA of incoming freshmen 510-600, 490-610, NA / 3.6

Diversity 31 percent
Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 4.1 years
Alumni giving rate 11 percent
 The way that students talk about PU, you'd think this small private liberal arts school outside of Portland was one of the most underappreciated in the Pacific Northwest. Rigorous course work, small classes, and professors who go the extra mile are the norm here, and the optometry and education programs are considered standouts. Nearly half of the school's students come from out of state—many from Hawaii—but everyone is invited to sample the roast pig and watch the fire jugglers at the school's annual luau. Pacific's Music in May program, which invites a select group of area high school students to participate in an annual three-day workshop that culminates in a Saturday-afternoon concert, celebrated its 60th anniversary this year. Another musical badge of honor: Nancy Wilson, lead guitarist and vocalist for the seminal rock band Heart, is PU's most famous dropout.

27. WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

Pullman, Washington
Founded 1890
Undergrad enrollment 15,003
In-state tuition / Out-of-state tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$6,866 / \$17,180 / \$10,915
Applicants / Freshman class size / Sophomore retention rate 10,142 / 3,208 / 74 percent
Average SAT / GPA of incoming freshmen 490-600, 510-610, 470-570 / 3.4
Diversity 15 percent
Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 4.5 years
Alumni giving rate 17 percent
 WSU's communications school is almost as well respected as its namesake, graduate and famed journalist Edward R. Murrow, and the school's veterinary program is also considered one of the best in the country, ranked 14th by *U.S. News and World Report* in 2007. The nickname "Wazoo" may have fallen out of favor among administrators a couple of years ago, but many students report that the party-school image it evokes is still accurate. Among Oregon and Washington schools with enrollment of more than 5,000, WSU has the highest percentage of students

in fraternities and sororities (14 percent and 18 percent, respectively). WSU grads like National Book Award winner and Seattle literary personality Sherman Alexie are fiercely loyal, and membership in the alumni association has risen 50 percent since 2004.

28. WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY-VANCOUVER

Vancouver, Washington

Founded 1989

Undergrad enrollment 2,008

In-state tuition / Out-of-state tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$5,812 / \$16,126 / \$10,915

Applicants / Freshman class size / Sophomore retention rate 400 / 163 / NA

Average SAT / GPA of incoming freshmen NA / 3.5

Diversity 11 percent

Average time to obtain bachelor's degree NA

Alumni giving rate 17 percent

Historically a research and adult-education university, WSU Vancouver first opened classes to freshmen in the fall of 2006. With 16 bachelor degrees now available, this branch school can offer undergrads top-notch instruction in subjects like Remote Sensing Engineering, Environmental Science, and business and education-leadership development. The popularity of student clubs like the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, Human Resource Society, and Student Business Organization underscores the serious-mindedness of students here, many of whom tend to be older and 60 percent of whom are female. The nonresidential Vancouver campus is also the largest of the satellite WSU's by a nearly two-to-one margin.



29. EASTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Cheney, Washington

Founded 1882

Undergrad enrollment 9,841

In-state tuition / Out-of-state tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$4,485 / \$13,749 / NA

Applicants / Freshman class size / Freshman retention rate 3,700 / 3,049 / 73 percent

Average SAT* / GPA of incoming freshmen 410-530, 420-540, 410-510 / 3.3

Diversity 20 percent

Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 4.8 years

Alumni giving rate 17 percent

Training students to be teachers is a focus at EWU, which—with a 24 percent increase in enrollment since 1997—is the fastest-growing public university in Washington. Its social work and creative writing programs are also well respected, and the school has received attention for its cost-effectiveness from Kaplan and *Newsweek's* annual college catalog, which named EWU one of its Best Value for the Tuition Dollar Schools. Spawn comic book creator Todd McFarlane and baritone opera star Thomas Hampson are two of the university's more celebrated alums, though faculty members have also had their share of headlines: English professor Grant Smith has gotten a considerable amount of ink—locally and nationally—thanks to his linguistics-based method for predicting the winner of presidential elections based on the candidates' last names.



30. WESTERN OREGON UNIVERSITY

Monmouth, Oregon

Founded 1856

Undergrad enrollment 4,500

In-state tuition / Out-of-state tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$5,151 / \$13,743 / \$10,225

Applicants / Freshman class size / Sophomore retention rate 2,217 / 970 / 70 percent

Average SAT† / GPA of incoming freshmen 420-530, 430-530, 400-510 / 3.3

Diversity 20 percent

Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 4.5 years

Alumni giving rate* 24 percent

Although students don't give Monmouth high marks for its social life (most go to neighboring University of Oregon or Oregon State University to party), WOU has lately earned attention for some of its more unusual academic offerings, such as its Fire Services Administration program

for future and current firefighters and its U.S.-Mexico Border Field School, which guides anthropology undergrads through fieldwork in Mexico as they investigate the social and political issues of the area. The university also offers a "tuition promise," which guarantees students a fixed yearly tuition rate for the duration of their studies.

31. NORTHWEST UNIVERSITY

Kirkland, Washington

Founded 1934

Undergrad enrollment 1,076

Tuition / Average amount of financial aid* \$19,762 / \$13,681

Applicants / Freshman class size / Freshman retention rate 381 / 169 / 65 percent

Average SAT / GPA of incoming freshmen* 440-560, 440-560, 430-550 / 3.2

Diversity 17 percent

Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 4.5 years

Alumni giving rate 3 percent

Northwest's most popular student clubs include Worship Service and Student Ministries—strong indicators that the students don't come for the bacchanalian blowouts as much as for the biblical buzz. A recently completed state-of-the-art science center has brought a full complement of biology studies and a school of nursing to Northwest, perhaps filling an empty place in the hearts of those who still lament the Seahawks' departure from their former headquarters adjacent to campus. Run by the Assemblies of God church, Northwest is also a common stop on Republican politicians' speaking tours.

32. WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY-TRI-CITIES

Richland, Washington

Founded 1989

Undergrad enrollment 924

In-state tuition / Out-of-state tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$5,812 / \$16,126 / \$10,915

Applicants / Freshman class size / Sophomore retention rate 291 / 104 / NA

Average SAT / GPA of incoming freshmen NA / 3.3

Diversity 13 percent

Average time to obtain bachelor's degree NA

Alumni giving rate 17 percent

The Tri-Cities WSU campus, a small

complex of new buildings perched on the banks of the Columbia River, added freshman and sophomore classes for the first time in 2007. Engineering and computer science are among its most lauded programs, partly because WSU borrows adjunct faculty from the superbrain-riddled staff of its neighbor, the U.S. Department of Energy Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. The university's agricultural programs also connect with farming communities in the area through research and course work that partner with the USDA Agricultural Research Station in nearby Prosser.



33. UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON-BOTHELL

Bothell, Washington

Founded 1990

Undergrad enrollment 1,604

In-state tuition / Out-of-state tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$6,390 / \$22,130 / \$11,200

Applicants / Freshman class size / Sophomore retention rate 502 / 152 / NA

Average SAT / GPA of incoming freshmen 460-560, 490-590, NA / 3.3

Diversity 42 percent

Average time to obtain bachelor's degree NA

Alumni giving rate 15 percent

Like the Tacoma branch of UW, the Bothell campus began accepting freshmen in 2006 after being a two-year school for 15 years. Among the three UW branches, Bothell has the greatest diversity, and studies in computer and software systems and nursing are among the most popular here. Business studies are big, too—as is membership in the Entrepreneurship Club. Last year the school offered \$10,000 to the student team that could most convincingly pitch its business idea to an independent panel of judges at the annual Student Entrepreneurship Final Business Plan Competition. UW Bothell isn't afraid to leap into the twenty-first century, either—in lieu of term papers, environmental science professor Martha Groom recently required her students to write comprehensive entries for the notoriously questionable Wikipedia.



34. PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY

Portland, Oregon
Founded 1946
Undergrad enrollment 18,916
In-state tuition / Out-of-state tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$5,764 / \$17,830 / \$8,149
Applicants / Freshman class size / Sophomore retention rate 3,726 / 1,671 / 79 percent
Average SAT / GPA of incoming freshmen 460-600, 460-580, 440-560 / 3.3
Diversity 25 percent
Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 5.7 years
Alumni giving rate* 5 percent

Thanks to its location on the edge of downtown Portland, students love PSU's campus, but the same can't be said about their zeal for the educational opportunities; 36 visitors to StudentsReview.com gave the school an average grade of B- in academics. More than 40 percent of students attend school part-time, and *U.S. News'* latest college report pegs PSU students' average age at 25. The ethnic and cultural diversity of the student body is one of the school's most notable attributes, and PSU's Multicultural Center, Native American Student and Community Center, and Women's Resource Center are some of its most vibrant organizations. The nationally ranked masters program in social work and doctoral program in urban planning are cornerstones of PSU's continued efforts to gain nationwide respect.



35. UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON-TACOMA

Tacoma, Washington
Founded 1990
Undergrad enrollment 2,653
In-state tuition / Out-of-state tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$6,390 / \$22,130 / \$11,200
Applicants / Freshman class size / Sophomore retention rate 529 / 197 / NA
Average SAT / GPA of incoming freshmen 420-540, 440-540, NA / 3.3

Diversity 31 percent
Average time to obtain bachelor's degree NA
Alumni giving rate 13 percent
 After rejecting almost 8,000 applicants last year at its Seattle campus, UW proposed a plan last summer to increase enrollment at the Tacoma branch to 5,500 by 2017. Based on SAT scores and GPA of incoming freshmen, Tacoma may appear the easiest of the three UW branches to get into, but enrollees who enter the school's urban studies, nursing, and technology programs will find much to challenge them. *Outside* magazine named Tacoma one of the 20 best towns for civic reinvention in the country in 2008 and gave this UW school nods for breathing "new life" into what was once an "inner-city ghost town." Extracurriculars here are a mélange of serious student clubs (Association of Student Accountants, Black Student Union, Student Social Work Organization) and less-serious athletics (Ping-Pong, foosball).

36. SOUTHERN OREGON UNIVERSITY

Ashland, Oregon
Founded 1926
Undergrad enrollment 5,000
In-state tuition / Out-of-state tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$5,677 / \$18,669 / \$7,297
Applicants / Freshman class size / Freshman retention rate 1,900 / 785 / 66 percent
Average SAT (reading and math combined) / GPA of incoming freshmen 1040 / 3.3
Diversity 12 percent
Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 4.7 years
Alumni giving rate 6 percent

SOU's sylvan location at the foothills of the Siskiyou and Cascade ranges may be one of its most magnificent attributes, and, in 2003, *Outside* magazine ranked the school 20th (just behind University of Hawaii) on its list of outdoor-recreation-friendly colleges. Though overall academics can be middling, the school has earned boasting rights for its criminology program and its laboratory of anthropology, which is under contract with federal agencies and the Coquille Indian tribe to conduct archaeological excavations along the Coquille River. The school also has a reputation for

a strong theater program, which takes advantage of Ashland's world-renowned Oregon Shakespeare Festival; famous graduates of the program include Ty Burrell, of last summer's *Incredible Hulk*.

37. ST. MARTIN'S UNIVERSITY

Lacey, Washington
Founded 1895
Undergrad enrollment 1,344
Tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$23,810 / \$22,200
Applicants / Freshman class size / Sophomore retention rate 719 / 246 / 59 percent
Average SAT (combined) / GPA of incoming freshmen 1475 / 3.2
Diversity 30 percent
Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 4 years
Alumni giving rate 10 percent
 Nestled in the bucolic environs of Lacey (bedroom community to Olympia), St. Martin's University is a Benedictine Catholic school that caters to a mostly local student body (only 8 percent of attendees come from out of state). With a dry campus, no Greek life, and many students going home to family on weekends, a monkish social scene is no surprise here. For those who don't mind the ascetic atmosphere, the school's relatively strong business, engineering, or education programs may offer enlightenment.

38. EASTERN OREGON UNIVERSITY

La Grande, Oregon
Founded 1929
Undergrad enrollment 3,032
Tuition / Average amount of financial aid* \$6,099 / \$8,412
Applicants / Freshman class size / Freshman retention rate 725 / 533 / 64 percent
Average SAT / GPA of incoming freshmen 418-530, 410-530, 400-500 / 3.2
Diversity 11 percent
Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 4.6 years
Alumni giving rate 9 percent
 Despite its small size, EOU has a reputation for attracting a comparatively large number of international students. Detractors will say that La Grande's remote, small-town character hurts campus life, but one student told us that "the whole town is a hangout because everyone feels comfortable and at

home." Those who have a thing for rock (I think communing with nature, not amps that go to 11) will also find plenty to keep them busy, starting 25 miles northwest of town at Mount Emily. Although not as selective as other schools, EOU isn't a slacker's haven: Some of its most popular student organizations—the chemistry club and theater club—extend the school's notable academic programs into the extracurricular realm for kids who just can't get enough in the classroom. EOU also focuses on involving itself locally: Students in the education program host family science night at the town middle school, the Speel-Ya club connects with Native American communities in the area, and nearly one-third of the school's Federal Work Study funds go toward students' participation in community service.

39. CORNISH COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

Seattle, Washington
Founded 1914
Undergrad enrollment 800
Tuition / Average amount of financial aid \$23,700 / \$6,500
Applicants / Freshman class size / Sophomore retention rate 860 / 283 / 70 percent
Average SAT / GPA of incoming freshmen NA / NA
Diversity 17 percent
Average time to obtain bachelor's degree 4 years
Alumni giving rate 14 percent
 Almost 40 percent of Cornish students come from out of state, possibly because the school is one of only a handful in the country to offer both visual and performing arts programs; BFAs are available in art, dance, design, music, performance production, and theater. Perhaps nothing recommends Cornish so strongly as its list of notable former faculty: Northwest School painters Morris Graves and Mark Tobey; avant-garde composer John Cage; mercurial performance artist Meredith Monk. And the school's roster of high-achieving alumni includes Academy Award-winning costume designer Colleen Atwood, modern dance demigod Merce Cunningham, and news anchor Chet Huntley. After nearly 90 years on Capitol Hill, Cornish relocated to the Denny Triangle neighborhood in 2003, but its focus on cutting-edge arts training remains the same.