UC SANTA BARBARA

THE Current

May 31, 2017

Andrea Estrada

Dream School

In the third annual College Access Index published by The New York Times, UC Santa Barbara has ranked No. 2 for its commitment to economic diversity. The ranking is based on a combination of the number of lower- and middle-income students a college or university enrolls and the tuition it charges these students.

The University of California dominated the list, with only UC Irvine ranking higher than UCSB. UC Davis, UC San Diego and UCLA followed in the third through fifth spots, respectively. UC Berkeley came in at No. 9.

According to the Times, the index is based on the share of students receiving Pell grants; the graduation rate of students on Pell grants; and the net cost, after financial aid, that a college or university charged low- and middle-income students. The index, as the Times noted, “is a measure of which top institutions are doing the most to promote the American dream.”

An article associated with the ranking noted that at the public colleges in the index, the average share of last year’s freshman class receiving Pell grants — which means they typically come from the bottom half of the income distribution — fell to 21.8 percent, from 24.3 percent in 2011-12.

“States are making it much more difficult for their residents to get high-quality high education,” said Sandy Baum of the Urban Institute. “They are causing their institutions to charge more, to take more out of state students, to cut quality. That’s very shortsighted.

The complete College Access Index can be found at https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/05/25/sunday-review/opinion-pe....

In other rankings, UCSB has placed No. 5 in the Student Loan Report's "Top 250 Public Colleges that Offer Freshmen the Most Financial Aid."

Financial aid is defined as the average financial aid package awarded to need-based, degree-seeking, full-time freshmen. The universities and colleges were evaluated based on this metric using Peterson's Financial Aid Data Set-2015. All data was self-reported the institutions and provided by Peterson's. Schools are ranked from highest to lowest according to average financial aid awarded per need-based, full-time freshmen.

"Financial aid is a crucial tool for students looking to attend college," an article associated with the ranking noted. "The schools listed in this report presumably recognize its importance by increasing its availability.

Again, the University of California dominated the list. Only UC Merced (No. 1), UC Santa Cruz (No. 3) and UC Riverside (No. 4) placed higher than UCSB. The University of Virginia took the No. 2 spot and UCLA, UC Irvine, UC Berkeley and UC Davis landed in the top 10.

The complete ranking can be found at https://studentloans.net/public-colleges-that-offer-freshmen-the-most-f....

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.