UC SANTA BARBARA

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UCSB again makes a strong showing, across several categories, in annual college rankings

Landing among the country's — and the world's — top institutions, UC Santa Barbara continues to place highly for research, academics, value and more in multiple prominent rankings. The new assessments together serve as a testament to the university's strength across disciplines and its culture of innovation and inclusivity.

"At UC Santa Barbara, our academic community is driven by the relentless pursuit of excellence," said Chancellor Dennis Assanis. "The recent rankings across a range of publications indicate, once again, that UC Santa Barbara is recognized as a preeminent research university that cares deeply about the success of our students. We are grateful for the outstanding work of our world-class faculty, dedicated staff and our amazing students who bring our mission to life every day."

UCSB is the nation's No. 11 public university, while ranking No. 27 among all U.S. universities and No. 71 among all universities worldwide in Times Higher Education's World University 2027 rankings. The UK-based publication evaluates institutions by teaching, research, the economic footprint of that research, and international staff, students and research collaborations — across a pool of 2,297 universities in 118 countries and territories.

In Forbes Magazine’s 2027 America’s Top Colleges rankings, UCSB is the No. 12 public university in the nation, and No. 42 overall. The Forbes rankings emphasize return on investment, weighing alumni salaries, debt, graduation rates and overall academic performance based graduation rates, student debt, alumni salaries, achievements and other factors.

Driven by data, U.S. News & World Report annually compares more than 1,700 colleges and universities using up to 17 measures of academic quality and graduate success. For the publication’s 2027 Best Colleges Report, UCSB earned 11 high-ranking spots across multiple categories, ranking as the No. 14 U.S. public university and the No. 44 overall university nationwide.

U.S. News also ranked UCSB as the No. 12 best value in-state institution among all national universities, the No. 22 best college for veterans and the No. 31 national university for social mobility.

According to Princeton Review, UCSB is the No. 15 Best Value College and No. 20 for Best Career Placement among public schools, with rankings based on academics, cost, financial aid, debt, graduation rates and alumni career and salary data.

Using a star system rather than numbered rankings, Money Magazine again issued UCSB 4-½ stars in its Best Colleges 2026 report. The assessment showcases the country’s top value four-year schools based on 25 metrics, including graduation rates, cost of attendance, financial aid, student debt and alumni salaries.

Meanwhile, Washington Monthly — in the only assessment of its kind by a journalistic outlet — again named UCSB one of America’s Best Colleges for Research, ranking the campus at No. 37 among top U.S. research universities, both public and private. According to the magazine, their ranking “evaluates the roughly 140 universities that each spend at least $100 million a year on research, scoring them along four equally weighted measures: total research expenditure; the number of science and engineering doctorates awarded; the faculty elected to the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine; and the major national honors a school’s scholars collect.”

Research impact is also a key metric in ShanghaiRanking Consultancy’s 2026 Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU). Ascending nine spots globally over last year, UCSB was ranked No. 61 worldwide. The campus also jumped three spots nationally to land at No. 30 among U.S. institutions evaluated. ARWU annually ranks

the world’s top 1,000 research universities.

Routinely recognized for its entrepreneurial culture, UCSB was ranked No. 58 among PitchBook’s 2026 Top 100 Universities for Entrepreneurship, an assessment of schools known to attract and produce future founders. The annual ranking compares colleges based on the number of undergraduate alumni entrepreneurs who have raised venture capital in the last decade, using PitchBook data and analysis of more than 222,000 VC-backed founders.

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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.