

Forbes is a well-known bi-weekly magazine. It is a much esteemed publication that needs no introduction.

It is most commonly known for publishing lists of richest Americans, top billionaires and other similar data.

Forbes first published a list of top American colleges and universities in 2008. The main objective of compiling this list was to keep its readers informed about the best colleges in America.

Forbes has its own standards by which it judges an institution and then awards rankings.

The list of best colleges and universities was updated in 2009 and again in 2010.

Ranking Criteria and Methodology

In 2009, Forbes included some less recognized colleges and universities in their rankings. The same year military academics were given significantly higher rankings.

Forbes' college and university ranking is based on the list of alumni in Who's who in America, student evaluations of faculty from a website,ayscale of the alumni, rates of four-year graduation, and number of nationally competitive wards received by faculty and students. Another factor that is taken into consideration is the four-year accumulated student debt.

Another list – Top colleges for getting rich – was also published by Forbes. The sources for this list were votes cast by anonymous readers and figures obtained from a websiteayscale.com that collects data about salaries of graduates. Both these sources were not independently verifiable and thus, not relevant.

The list of top colleges and universities contained some top medical schools, law colleges, undergraduate business schools, undergraduate engineering schools and best pharmacy schools.

The list is as given below:

1. Williams College, MA
2. Princeton University, NJ
3. Amherst College, MA
4. United States Military Academy, NY
5. Massachusetts Institute of Technology, MA
6. Stanford University, CA
7. Swarthmore College, PA

8. Harvard University, MA
9. Claremont McKenna College, CA
10. Yale University, CT
11. United States Air Force Academy, CO
12. Wellesley College, MA
13. Columbia University, NY
14. Haverford College, PA
15. Wesleyan University, CT
16. Whitman College, WA
17. Pomona College, CA
18. Northwestern University, IL
19. California Institute of Technology, CA
20. University of Chicago, IL
21. Carleton College, MN
22. Harvey Mudd College, CA
23. Vassar College, NY
24. Centre College, KY
25. Rice University, TX
26. Middlebury College, VT
27. Boston College, MA
28. Colgate University, NY
29. United States Naval Academy, MD
30. Dartmouth College, NH
31. Colby College, ME
32. Kenyon College, OH

33. University of Notre Dame, IN
34. Tufts University, MA
35. Smith College, MA
36. University of Pennsylvania, PA
37. Washington and Lee University, VA
38. Bryn Mawr College, PA
39. College of the Holy Cross, MA
40. Bowdoin College, ME
41. Duke University, NC
42. Wabash College, IN
43. Vanderbilt University, TN
44. University of Virginia, VA
45. Brown University, RI
46. College of William and Mary, VA
47. Rhodes College, TN
48. Davidson College, NC
49. Union College, NY
50. Lawrence University
51. Colorado College, CO
52. Georgetown University, DC
53. Emory University, GA
54. Bates College, ME
55. Macalester College, MN
56. Bucknell University, PA
57. Brandeis University, MA

58. Wofford College, SC
59. Wheaton College, IL
60. Virginia Military Institute, VA
61. Lafayette College, PA
62. University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC
63. Barnard College, NY
64. DePauw University, IN
65. University of California, Berkeley, CA
66. Oberlin College, OH
67. Dickinson College, PA
68. Principia College, IL
69. Reed College, OR
70. Cornell University, NY
71. University of California, Los Angeles, CA
72. Wake Forest University, NC
73. Kalamazoo College, MI
74. Hamilton College, NY
75. Knox College, IL

Criticism:

Forbes rankings were criticized for their reliance on subjective sources like *Who's Who in America* and the website – ratemyprofessor.com – in order to compile their list. They were also criticized for awarding lower ranks to some of the very well recognized universities and research establishments.

These also include members of Ivy League. Another criticism that Forbes had to face was that it compared federally funded educational institutions with those that had to raise their own money. Critics said that this was not fair.

Impact:

The above list is based on many parameters. Some people do have their reservations about the complete authenticity of this list. But this is a problem that has been there since the first list of best colleges and schools was published.

Students must not blindly believe these rankings. But this can surely give them an overview.