

The Olive Book 100: Where Students Choose When They Have a Choice

Revealed Preference College Ranking

In the [Parchment college comparison platform](#), two universities can be compared to discover: of those students who were accepted to both schools, *and chose to enroll in one of the two*, what percentage of those students went to School A and what percentage instead enrolled in School B. By pitting hundreds of schools against one another in a round robin tournament to see which colleges students chose when they got into both schools and chose to enroll in one, a *revealed* preference emerges. This ranking likely accounts for the students' perception of the college's academic reputation, affordability & perceived value, financial aid offerings, campus amenities (i.e. food services, sports teams, dorms with air conditioning, Greek life, beauty of campus grounds), location, perceived nightlife expectations, weather, balance of in-person vs. online classes offered, class size, majors available, and a general sense that "students like me belong in a place like this."

Results

Table 1

Ranking before adjustments for acceptance rates

| Schools | Score | Ranking |
|---------------------------------------|----------|---------|
| Massachusetts Institute of Technology | 65.19858 | 1 |
| Columbia University | 62.28276 | 2 |
| Stanford University | 61.1989 | 3 |
| Princeton University | 60.24627 | 4 |
| Yale University | 60.2093 | 5 |
| Harvard University | 60.13 | 6 |
| Brown University | 59.20438 | 7 |
| Northwestern University | 59.15607 | 8 |
| Johns Hopkins University | 57.54546 | 9 |

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|---|----------|----|
| California Institute of Technology | 57.28333 | 10 |
| University of Chicago | 57.19149 | 11 |
| Duke University | 56.97143 | 12 |
| Cornell University | 55.74586 | 13 |
| University of Pennsylvania | 55.5704 | 14 |
| University of California, Berkeley | 54.7534 | 15 |
| University of California, Los Angeles | 54.5713 | 16 |
| Dartmouth College | 54.5547 | 17 |
| Carnegie Mellon University | 54.54375 | 18 |
| University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill | 54.44966 | 19 |
| Vanderbilt University | 54.36667 | 20 |
| Georgetown University | 53.07971 | 21 |
| Emory University | 53.0531 | 22 |
| Washington University in St. Louis | 53.0234 | 23 |
| Amherst College | 53.0179 | 24 |
| Wellesley College | 53.0153 | 25 |
| Boston College | 52.8682 | 26 |
| Claremont McKenna College | 52.7835 | 27 |
| University of California, Davis | 52.6375 | 28 |
| University of California, San Diego | 52.27523 | 29 |
| Pomona College | 51.96667 | 30 |
| Barnard College | 51.79032 | 31 |
| Harvey Mudd College | 51.59615 | 32 |
| Smith College | 51.12 | 33 |
| University of Michigan - Ann Arbor | 50.9037 | 34 |
| University of Southern California | 50.8733 | 35 |
| University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign | 49.18371 | 36 |
| University of Wisconsin - Madison | 49.15692 | 37 |
| University of Notre Dame | 48.26738 | 38 |
| University of Texas at Austin | 48.0297 | 39 |
| Georgia Institute of Technology | 46.84103 | 40 |
| Illinois State University | 46.67857 | 41 |
| Purdue University | 46.67658 | 42 |
| University of North Carolina School of the Arts | 45.53846 | 43 |
| Virginia Tech | 45.47982 | 44 |
| University of California, Irvine | 44.5122 | 45 |
| University of Virginia | 44.2551 | 46 |
| Trinity College | 43.40541 | 47 |
| University of Georgia | 42.15816 | 48 |
| University of Florida | 41.15476 | 49 |
| Tufts University | 40.42157 | 50 |

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|---|----------|----|
| University of California, Santa Barbara | 39.96585 | 51 |
| Rice University | 39.75781 | 52 |
| New York University | 39.30631 | 53 |
| University of Washington | 39.08811 | 54 |
| Texas A & M University-College Station | 38.9204 | 55 |
| University of Maryland, College Park | 38.27746 | 56 |
| Rutgers University-New Brunswick | 38.20395 | 57 |
| Rutgers University - Cook College | 38.1675 | 58 |
| Ohio State University-Lima Campus | 38.15455 | 59 |
| Lehigh University | 37.09402 | 60 |
| University of Rochester | 36.69343 | 61 |
| Wake Forest University | 36.52778 | 62 |
| Case Western Reserve University | 35.53846 | 63 |
| Delaware State University | 35.21429 | 64 |
| Pennsylvania State University-Penn State Abington | 35.11111 | 65 |
| Iowa State University | 34.83784 | 66 |
| University of Utah | 34.57416 | 67 |
| University of South Alabama | 34.57143 | 68 |
| Howard University | 34.21495 | 69 |
| Pitzer College | 34.14667 | 70 |
| Brigham Young University-Provo | 34.13821 | 71 |
| University of South Carolina | 34.09302 | 72 |
| Sapling University | 34.08108 | 73 |
| Saint Johns River State College | 34.05556 | 74 |
| Texas Christian University | 34.02658 | 75 |
| DePaul University | 33.84141 | 76 |
| Prairie View A & M University | 33.8375 | 77 |
| Pennsylvania State University-Penn State Erie-Behrend College | 33.70833 | 78 |
| University of Cincinnati | 33.70202 | 79 |
| Chapman University | 33.50365 | 80 |
| Indiana University - Bloomington | 33.48289 | 81 |
| Gonzaga University | 33.48 | 82 |
| University of Washington-Tacoma Campus | 33.37931 | 83 |
| University of Northwestern Ohio | 33.36842 | 84 |
| Lipscomb University | 33.30952 | 85 |
| Florida State University | 33.23913 | 86 |
| Grinnell College | 33.19192 | 87 |
| Ohio State University-Main Campus | 33.09283 | 88 |
| University of Texas at Dallas | 33.08523 | 89 |
| Marquette University | 33.07027 | 90 |

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|---|----------|-----|
| Haverford College | 32.90625 | 91 |
| San Diego State University | 32.89286 | 92 |
| Newman University | 32.875 | 93 |
| Michigan State University | 32.70139 | 94 |
| Edgewood College | 32.63265 | 95 |
| Hope College | 32.6 | 96 |
| Washington and Lee University | 32.54167 | 97 |
| Weber State University | 32.37037 | 98 |
| Dickinson College | 32.35 | 99 |
| Tulane University | 32.18675 | 100 |
| Southern Illinois University Carbondale | 32.1157 | 101 |
| Carleton College | 32.03192 | 102 |
| University of Delaware | 32.02874 | 103 |
| University of Illinois at Chicago | 31.98889 | 104 |
| Aurora University | 31.97101 | 105 |
| Swarthmore College | 31.96 | 106 |
| Lee University | 31.90625 | 107 |
| University of Louisville | 31.85837 | 108 |
| University of San Diego | 31.85402 | 109 |
| Central Michigan University | 31.84103 | 110 |
| Bryn Mawr College | 31.78462 | 111 |
| Norfolk State University | 31.64 | 112 |
| West Virginia University | 31.625 | 113 |
| Vassar College | 31.62353 | 114 |
| Texas A & M University-Corpus Christi | 31.60099 | 115 |
| South Dakota State University | 31.59091 | 116 |
| University of Dubuque | 31.58974 | 117 |
| University of Maryland, Baltimore | 31.54546 | 118 |
| Virginia Commonwealth University | 31.50704 | 119 |
| Davidson College | 31.46774 | 120 |
| University of Bridgeport | 31.42857 | 121 |
| Bowdoin College | 31.35593 | 122 |
| Texas Tech University | 31.3494 | 123 |
| California State University, Northridge | 31.34343 | 124 |
| University of Nebraska at Kearney | 31.3125 | 125 |
| University of California, Riverside | 31.20588 | 126 |
| University of Central Florida | 31.04598 | 127 |
| University of South Florida | 30.99457 | 128 |
| University of Oklahoma | 30.95025 | 129 |
| University of Kentucky | 30.8374 | 130 |
| Louisiana Tech University | 30.7 | 131 |

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|---|----------|-----|
| Northern Illinois University | 30.58865 | 132 |
| St Olaf College | 30.57692 | 133 |
| Hamilton College | 30.56863 | 134 |
| University of Nebraska, Lincoln | 30.52353 | 135 |
| Occidental College | 30.43564 | 136 |
| Williams College | 30.33333 | 137 |
| Otterbein University | 30.30233 | 138 |
| University of Alabama at Huntsville | 30.27869 | 139 |
| College of William and Mary | 30.22078 | 140 |
| University of California, Santa Cruz | 30.1946 | 141 |
| Augustana University | 30.09804 | 142 |
| Bates College | 30.07143 | 143 |
| University of Illinois at Springfield | 30.02326 | 144 |
| Rutgers University-Camden | 30 | 145 |
| Eastern Kentucky University | 29.96694 | 146 |
| Saint Mary's University of Minnesota | 29.94286 | 147 |
| Lafayette College | 29.90164 | 148 |
| University of Iowa | 29.8877 | 149 |
| Kent State University | 29.86131 | 150 |
| University of Missouri | 29.82412 | 151 |
| California State University, Los Angeles | 29.725 | 152 |
| Whitman College | 29.69318 | 153 |
| University of Toledo | 29.62832 | 154 |
| Tiffin University | 29.5614 | 155 |
| University of Arizona | 29.55823 | 156 |
| Louisiana State University-Alexandria | 29.47368 | 157 |
| Mount Holyoke College | 29.47059 | 158 |
| Clemson University | 29.41048 | 159 |
| University of North Carolina at Charlotte | 29.40476 | 160 |
| Biola University | 29.4 | 161 |
| University of Kansas | 29.38342 | 162 |
| University of St. Thomas | 29.37383 | 163 |
| University of Arkansas | 29.29167 | 164 |
| Widener University | 29.28125 | 165 |
| Pepperdine University | 29.26389 | 166 |
| Saint Louis University | 29.25532 | 167 |
| Miami University - Oxford | 29.08947 | 168 |
| Fort Hays State University | 29.05263 | 169 |
| University of La Verne | 29.05128 | 170 |
| Northern Kentucky University | 29.02857 | 171 |
| Alabama A & M University | 29 | 172 |

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|---|----------|-----|
| Scripps College | 28.89362 | 173 |
| Illinois Institute of Technology | 28.88073 | 174 |
| Northeastern University | 28.86413 | 175 |
| North Dakota State University | 28.86 | 176 |
| Shenandoah University | 28.84211 | 177 |
| Denison University | 28.74757 | 178 |
| Indiana University - Purdue University-Indianapolis | 28.73171 | 179 |
| Oklahoma State University | 28.72455 | 180 |
| New Mexico State University | 28.70732 | 181 |
| California State University, San Bernardino | 28.67123 | 182 |
| George Washington University | 28.65294 | 183 |
| Southern Methodist University | 28.52564 | 184 |
| Kalamazoo College | 28.46 | 185 |
| Middlebury College | 28.45614 | 186 |
| Kenyon College | 28.44828 | 187 |
| Colorado College | 28.42667 | 188 |
| Benedictine University | 28.40816 | 189 |
| Syracuse University | 28.36923 | 190 |
| University of Minnesota - Twin Cities | 28.33878 | 191 |
| University of North Dakota | 28.32653 | 192 |
| American University | 28.30769 | 193 |
| University of Tennessee | 28.30769 | 194 |
| Louisiana State University | 28.27638 | 195 |
| Oklahoma City University | 28.25807 | 196 |
| Utah State University | 28.12871 | 197 |
| Mississippi State University | 28.10135 | 198 |
| Upper Iowa University | 27.95833 | 199 |
| University of New Hampshire | 27.94667 | 200 |
| University of Miami | 27.92683 | 201 |
| Skidmore College | 27.91667 | 202 |
| California State University, Sacramento | 27.91 | 203 |
| College of the Holy Cross | 27.88889 | 204 |
| Oberlin College | 27.87826 | 205 |
| Azusa Pacific University | 27.85938 | 206 |
| Lewis & Clark College | 27.8125 | 207 |
| University of Idaho | 27.73973 | 208 |
| Ashland University | 27.65909 | 209 |
| California State University, Long Beach | 27.57778 | 210 |
| University of Massachusetts at Lowell | 27.36 | 211 |
| Capital University | 27.36 | 212 |
| College of Charleston | 27.3587 | 213 |

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| Connecticut College | 27.33871 | 214 |
| Webster University | 27.33333 | 215 |
| Rutgers University - Mason Gross School of the Arts | 27.27273 | 216 |
| California State University, Chico | 27.22105 | 217 |
| Loyola University - Chicago | 27.09796 | 218 |
| University of South Carolina-Beaufort | 27.08163 | 219 |
| University of Maryland Eastern Shore | 27.05128 | 220 |
| Purdue University Fort Wayne | 27.03846 | 221 |
| University of Missouri - Kansas City | 27.02885 | 222 |
| Worcester Polytechnic Institute | 27 | 223 |
| North Carolina State University at Raleigh | 26.97297 | 224 |
| University of Dayton | 26.97183 | 225 |
| Andrews University | 26.85185 | 226 |
| Florida A&M University | 26.83453 | 227 |
| Villanova University | 26.74286 | 228 |
| Elon University | 26.68874 | 229 |
| Colorado Christian University | 26.675 | 230 |
| Catholic University of America | 26.65823 | 231 |
| Emerson College | 26.63415 | 232 |
| University of Houston | 26.58491 | 233 |
| Auburn University | 26.56842 | 234 |
| SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry | 26.54054 | 235 |
| University of Tulsa | 26.5 | 236 |
| University of Minnesota - Crookston | 26.5 | 237 |
| California State University, Fullerton | 26.43038 | 238 |
| University of Alabama at Birmingham | 26.27329 | 239 |
| Point Park University | 26.17978 | 240 |
| Gannon University | 26.11905 | 241 |
| Queens University of Charlotte | 26.01961 | 242 |
| Baylor University | 25.95964 | 243 |
| Macalester College | 25.95918 | 244 |
| Colby College | 25.94 | 245 |
| Bard College | 25.90741 | 246 |
| Brandeis University | 25.86207 | 247 |
| St. Mary's University | 25.76596 | 248 |
| Ohio University | 25.69231 | 249 |
| Fairfield University | 25.67742 | 250 |
| Gettysburg College | 25.65116 | 251 |
| University of New Mexico | 25.63372 | 252 |
| University of Vermont | 25.59756 | 253 |
| University of Rhode Island | 25.59211 | 254 |

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| Bowling Green State University | 25.57042 | 255 |
| University of South Dakota | 25.5 | 256 |
| Kansas State University | 25.46281 | 257 |
| University of Massachusetts Amherst | 25.44966 | 258 |
| Maryville University of Saint Louis | 25.38333 | 259 |
| Boston University | 25.37186 | 260 |
| Clark University | 25.35484 | 261 |
| South Carolina State University | 25.34 | 262 |
| Western Michigan University | 25.3027 | 263 |
| Birmingham-Southern College | 25.14286 | 264 |
| University of Alabama | 25.01569 | 265 |
| Arizona State University | 25.00355 | 266 |
| Saint Bonaventure University | 25 | 267 |
| University of Pittsburgh | 24.96226 | 268 |
| Morehead State University | 24.93243 | 269 |
| California State University, Fresno | 24.79546 | 270 |
| Michigan Technological University | 24.74595 | 271 |
| University of Colorado at Boulder | 24.68037 | 272 |
| Savannah State University | 24.65714 | 273 |
| Ball State University | 24.64824 | 274 |
| University of Connecticut | 24.575 | 275 |
| Rutgers University-Newark | 24.56 | 276 |
| SUNY at Albany | 24.53846 | 277 |
| University of New Orleans | 24.28 | 278 |
| Rochester Institute of Technology | 24.22043 | 279 |
| University of Wyoming | 24.12963 | 280 |
| University at Buffalo | 24.09524 | 281 |
| Babson College | 24.08 | 282 |
| McMaster University | 24 | 283 |
| Colorado School of Mines | 23.96894 | 284 |
| University of the Pacific | 23.86239 | 285 |
| Pace University | 23.85507 | 286 |
| Clarkson University | 23.71154 | 287 |
| Washington State University | 23.69399 | 288 |
| Providence College | 23.69231 | 289 |
| Temple University | 23.63743 | 290 |
| Stevens Institute of Technology | 23.51429 | 291 |
| Barry University | 23.44444 | 292 |
| University of Montana | 23.4381 | 293 |
| SUNY at Binghamton | 23.43617 | 294 |
| University of North Carolina at Greensboro | 23.42308 | 295 |

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|---|----------|-----|
| National University | 23.33333 | 296 |
| Worcester State University | 23.33333 | 297 |
| Oregon State University | 23.30899 | 298 |
| University of Maine | 23.28947 | 299 |
| Indiana University - East | 23.26923 | 300 |
| Colorado State University | 23.26904 | 301 |
| Missouri University of Science & Technology | 23.26733 | 302 |
| Stony Brook University | 23.26357 | 303 |
| Ithaca College | 23.14894 | 304 |
| Franklin & Marshall College | 23.11111 | 305 |
| East Carolina University | 23.07447 | 306 |
| Duquesne University | 22.70408 | 307 |
| University of Mississippi | 22.57738 | 308 |
| George Mason University | 22.51244 | 309 |
| University of Nevada - Reno | 22.40741 | 310 |
| The College of New Jersey | 22.33333 | 311 |
| Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute | 22.23077 | 312 |
| Reed College | 22.1068 | 313 |
| New Jersey Institute of Technology | 21.87719 | 314 |
| Florida Institute of Technology | 21.76978 | 315 |
| Lakeland University | 21.44444 | 316 |
| Lenoir-Rhyne University | 21.41936 | 317 |
| Southwest Minnesota State University | 21.31818 | 318 |
| St John's University-New York | 21.20213 | 319 |
| Hollins University | 21.04615 | 320 |
| University of Denver | 20.8871 | 321 |
| University of Hawaii at Manoa | 20.79144 | 322 |
| Youngstown State University | 20.65957 | 323 |
| Bowie State University | 20.64151 | 324 |
| Southern Utah University | 20.53731 | 325 |
| Drexel University | 20.51875 | 326 |
| Carthage College | 20.5124 | 327 |
| University of Oregon | 20.45413 | 328 |
| University of Hawaii, West Oahu | 20.42857 | 329 |
| Hofstra University | 20.39073 | 330 |
| New School | 20.33333 | 331 |
| Adelphi University | 20.22581 | 332 |
| George Fox University | 20.12963 | 333 |
| Yeshiva University | 20 | 334 |
| Lincoln College - Normal | 20 | 335 |
| American InterContinental University-Online | 20 | 336 |

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|---------------------------------------|----------|-----|
| University of San Francisco | 19.42857 | 337 |
| Pennsylvania State University | 19.28631 | 338 |
| Fordham University | 19.15084 | 339 |
| Cardinal Stritch University | 19.125 | 340 |
| Bethune-Cookman University | 18.89091 | 341 |
| Immaculata University | 18.375 | 342 |
| University of Colorado at Denver | 18.25 | 343 |
| Cleveland State University | 17.56338 | 344 |
| Seton Hall University | 16.87975 | 345 |
| University of Phoenix-Online Campus | 14.25 | 346 |
| Madison Area Technical College | 13.44737 | 347 |
| Grand Rapids Community College | 12.08772 | 348 |
| Rutgers University - Douglass College | . | . |
| Woodbury University | . | . |

Methodology

For the comparison, colleges earn points through a "round-robin" comparison method based on student enrollment decisions. When a student is accepted to multiple schools but chooses one over the others, the selected school earns points, while the rejected schools lose points. For example, if School A has an 80-20 advantage, meaning that of the subset of students who were accepted into both schools and chose to enroll in one of them, 80% chose School A and 20% chose School B, 30 points are added to School A's score, and 30 points are subtracted from School B's score. The more often a school is chosen over its competitors, especially those with higher existing scores, the more points it gains. This procedure creates a dynamic ranking system where schools accumulate or lose points based on real-world student choices, which are weighted to reflect the relative strength of each school based on the current scores.

Descriptive Statistics

The scores range from 12.08 to 65.19, with an average of 31.31 and a standard deviation of 9.95.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics

| | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|-------|-----------|-----------|-------------|----------------|
| | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic |
| Score | 12.087720 | 65.198580 | 31.31826264 | 9.958907686 |

Assumptions

The assumption of normality should be satisfied before conducting the ANOVA. The skewness and kurtosis of the normal variables should be between -2 and +2. In this study, skewness and kurtosis ranged from -2 to +2.

Table 3

Normality

| | Skewness | | Kurtosis | |
|-------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| | Statistic | Std. Error | Statistic | Std. Error |
| Score | 1.409 | .131 | 1.544 | .261 |

The assumption of homogeneity of variance should be met to conduct ANOVA. The researcher confirmed the assumption of homogeneity of variance by using Levene's test. A p-value of < 0.05 did not validate this assumption. Therefore, the variables were transformed to address the lack of homogeneity of variances.

Table 4

Tests of Homogeneity of Variances

| | | Levene Statistic | df1 | df2 | Sig. |
|---------|---|---------------------|-----|--------|-------|
| Ranking | Based on Mean | 39.753 | 6 | 341 | <.001 |
| | Based on Median | 34.535 | 6 | 341 | <.001 |
| | Based on Median and with adjusted df | 34.535 | 6 | 98.959 | <.001 |
| | Based on trimmed mean | 38.752 | 6 | 341 | <.001 |

Hypothesis Testing

RQ1. Is there a significant difference among the 350 schools?

ANOVA was conducted because it was the most appropriate method for measuring the difference in a continuous dependent variable between the groups. The ANOVA test ($F(6,341) = 2727.616, p < .001$) revealed a statistically significant difference between schools. The Tukey post hoc test further confirmed the robustness of the research findings, showing that the top 50 schools (52.41 ± 5.71) were significantly higher in ranking than the schools ranked 51-100 ($34.72 \pm 2.24, p < .001$), the schools ranked 101-150 ($31.03 \pm .70, p < .001$), the schools ranked 151-200 ($28.87 \pm .51, p < .001$), the schools ranked 201-250 ($26.86 \pm .67, p < .001$), the schools ranked 251-300 ($24.46 \pm .80, p < .001$), and the schools ranked 301-350 ($20.40 \pm 2.42, p < .001$).

Table 5

ANOVA

| | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-------------------|-------------------|-----|-------------|----------|-------|
| Between Groups | 3440300.000 | 6 | 573383.333 | 2727.616 | <.001 |
| Within Groups | 71683.000 | 341 | 210.214 | | |
| Total | 3511983.000 | 347 | | | |

For this ranking, lightly selective universities with acceptance rates of greater than 75% were not eligible for placement in the top 100 universities and were relocated to the alphabetical listing of schools 101 to 150.

Military academies were omitted from this ranking.

Why is Penn State's main campus not on this ranking? We assume that Penn State would be chosen by students on par with other East Coast and Midwest flagship big-state public universities like Rutgers and University of Illinois. However, the data did not bear that out: Penn State's main campus ranked 339th in our round-robin contest. We believe that the apparent oversight may be attributed to random data noise, unknown confounding factor, or error (perhaps someone at Parchment entered data for the main campus in the Abington campus's line, as that satellite campus ranked number 66). We also believe there may be few data points from the state of Pennsylvania in Parchment's data set, making those attending Penn State within the data set to be more likely charged out of state tuition. It's worth noting that Penn State does well against other Pennsylvania schools (University of Pittsburgh, Temple University, etc.), but that those other Pennsylvania colleges also perform worse than in other rankings. Similarly, Colorado, and New York public universities fared poorer in this ranking than in other rankings, perhaps because of underrepresentation in the sample set of students from those states too. Alas, there is no perfect data set.

We also see a trend whereby high-mid-tier schools that are expensive, cold-weather, and/or small (University of Rochester, RPI, Williams, Oberlin, Boston University, Northeastern, UConn, Brandeis, etc.) performed more poorly in the Olive Book revealed preference rankings than in other university rankings publications.

Think we made an error? Tell us about it so we can confirm we got this right—or fix it if we flubbed. Write to info@olive-book.com.