UCI is No. 1 among Money magazine’s ‘Best Colleges’

University is first public institution to claim top spot in national rankings
Monday, August 12, 2019
Shari Ledbetter
UCI News



UCI is No. 1 among Money magazine’s “Best Colleges,” supplanting Princeton University and making UCI the first public institution to top the national rankings.

Picture Credit:
Steve Zylius / UCI

According to *Money*, which recently went all digital and is now known as Money.com, UCI scored well across the board but especially in the measures of low-income and Pell Grant enrollment and favorable graduate outcomes.

“This latest recognition of our national leadership in combining outstanding academics with outstanding value is testament to the concerted efforts of our faculty, staff, students and supporters,” said Chancellor Howard Gillman. “It is our mission and our privilege to ensure that a world-class education is available to talented and ambitious students of all backgrounds and circumstances.”

In indicators of short- and long-term affordability, UCI excelled. The campus provided need-based grants to 59 percent of its students. Money.com also included newly available data on how many Pell Grant recipients a school graduates, a measure of how well it supports low-income students. Over 12,000 UCI enrollees received Pell

Grants in 2018-19, and UCI graduated more Pell students than any other college. The majority of them were first-generation students, for whom a university education is a means to upward social mobility. Almost half of UCI's incoming class of California-resident freshmen are first-gen, and the ratio is even higher for in-state transfer students.

Additionally, according to the survey, UCI graduates' median debt load was $19,000, much lower than the national average, and their early-career earnings averaged $57,700 per year.

These factors determining the Money.com rankings help explain why, among UC campuses, UCI had the largest total number of in-state freshman applications for the 2019-20 academic year, as well as the most from underrepresented minorities and Chicanos/Latinos.

Rising in the rankings

The Money.com recognition is the latest in a series putting UCI in the top tier of U.S. universities for affordability and excellence. According to *Forbes,* UCI ranks No. 1 in the country among public universities for "best value" – a school's ability to deliver the biggest bang for the tuition buck based on costs, academic quality, postgrad earnings, student debt and graduation success. *U.S. News & World Report* currently rates UCI the seventh-best public university in America. And in the 2019 *Wall Street Journal/Times Higher Education* rankings of this nation's universities, UCI placed first for offering an inclusive, supportive learning environment.

In addition, for the second consecutive time, the campus tops *The New York Times'* College Access Index of U.S. universities, which gauges their commitment to economic diversity through the number of low- and middle-income students that a school enrolls and the price it charges them.

To hear a 10-minute UCI podcast with Willie Banks, UCI's new vice chancellor for student affairs, on the Money.com rankings, visit **https://news.uci.edu.**

Money.com evaluates colleges annually using 26 factors across three categories – quality, affordability and outcomes – each of which accounts for one-third of a school's final score.

About the University of California, Irvine: Founded in 1965, UCI is the youngest member of the prestigious Association of American Universities. The campus has produced three Nobel laureates and is known for its academic achievement, premier research, innovation and anteater mascot. Led by Chancellor Howard Gillman, UCI has more than 36,000 students and offers 222 degree programs. It’s located in one of the world’s safest and most economically vibrant communities and is Orange County’s second-largest employer, contributing $5 billion annually to the local economy. For more on UCI, visit www.uci.edu.

Media access: Radio programs/stations may, for a fee, use an on-campus ISDN line to interview UCI faculty and experts, subject to availability and university approval. For more UCI news, visit news.uci.edu. Additional resources for journalists may be found at communications.uci.edu/for-journalists.

Original Source
Press Releases
Awards
View PDF