

## ***U.S. News and World Report Analysis – 2006***

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### **Summary of Rankings**

The 2005 *U.S. News & World Report* rankings were released August 19. Once again, Drake University is ranked among the top Master's Universities in the Midwest. Drake maintained its 4<sup>th</sup> place position among Midwest Masters Institutions in 2006. Drake is ranked 8<sup>th</sup> among 15 Midwest masters institutions listed in "Great Schools, Great Prices."

The rankings compare Drake University to other Master's Universities in the Midwest Region in reference to five areas of performance. These are listed in the first table. From the 2005 to 2006 Drake improved its rankings on alumni giving and faculty resources. Our financial resources rank dropped and other indicators were stable.

### **Summary of *US News* Component Rankings**

Evaluative Area	Percent item Contributes to Overall Ranking	Ranking 2006	Ranking 2005	Ranking 2004
Peer Assess. of Academic Quality	25%	2 (tied)	2	1 (tied)
Graduation and Retention Rate	25%	7	7	9
Faculty Resources	20%	23	33	59
Student Selectivity	15%	3	3	5
Financial Resources	10%	30	22	15
Alumni Giving	5%	46	50	49

### **Great Schools, Great Prices**

US News also provides a list of schools described as "Great Schools, Great Prices." Only schools ranked in the top half of their category rankings can be included. The higher the ranking and the lower the cost, the better the value rating. Drake is rated as the 8<sup>th</sup> best value among Master's institutions in the Midwest

### ***US News* 2005 Ranking Components**

In the following section, ratings for the top five Midwest Master's institutions are compared and some historical perspective on Drake University's ratings is provided. This analysis attempts to provide some insight into the elements that contribute to each of the ranking component, and some analysis of changes in Drake's position on each of these.

### **Overall Ranking**

Each of the past five years Drake has ranked among the top five Midwestern Universities-Master's. After two years at a rank of 5, in 2005 Drake improved be rated number 4 in the Midwest. In 2006, Creighton ranked number one in the Midwest Region. Drake's Overall rating score of 86 providing tie for fourth place.

<b>History of Drake Overall Rankings</b>		<b>2006 Rankings</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Ranking</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Overall Rating</b>	<b>Rank</b>
2002	3	Creighton University	100	1
2003	5	Valparaiso University	91	2
2004	5	Xavier University	90	3
2005	4	Drake University	86	4
2006	4	Bradley University	86	4

### **Peer Assessment**

Peer Assessment accounts for 25% of an institution's final score. Presidents, provosts, and directors of admission are asked to rate each school's academic programs on a scale from 1 (marginal) to 5 (distinguished). Drake tied for second in the 2006 rankings receiving a score of 3.9. Creighton was ranked first with a score of 4.1.

### **Drake Peer Assessment Ranks – 2002-2006**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Drake Ranking</b>	
2002	1	Tied with Creighton
2003	1	Tied with Creighton & Valparaiso
2004	1	Tied with Creighton
2005	2	
2006	2	Tied with Valparaiso

### **Graduation and Retention Rate**

The Graduation and Retention Rate accounts for 25% of an institution's final score. Within that 25%, retention of first-year students comprises 20% and the six-year graduation rate contributes 80% of the score. A four-year average is used for both first-year student retention and the six-year graduation rate.

### **2006 Graduation and Retention Rankings- Top Midwest Master's Universities**

<b>University</b>	<b>EFR Retention</b>	<b>Six-year Graduation</b>	<b>Graduation and Retention Rank</b>
Creighton	87%	71%	4
Valparaiso	87%	73%	3
Xavier	89%	75%	2
Drake	83%	70%	7
Bradley	88%	70%	5

### Drake USNWR Retention and Graduation Rate Averages: 2002-2006

Year	EFR Retention	Six-Year Graduation
2002	82%	66%
2003	82%	66%
2004	82%	68%
2005	82%	69%
2006	83%	70%

Drake first-year retention rates have improved steadily. However the four-year average is still 83%. Retention for the class that entered fall of 2004 was 86%. Drake has experienced a steady increase in the percentage of students graduating in six years. Continued improvement will be needed to raise our ranking among the top Midwest schools, all of which have graduation rates of 70% or above.

### Faculty Resources

The faculty resource category makes up 20% of a university's composite final score and is determined as follows:

Percent of classes under 20 students	(30%)
Percent of classes with 50 or more students	(10%)
Faculty compensation	(35%)
Professors' highest degree	(15%)
Student-faculty ratio	(5%)
Percent of faculty full-time	(5%)

The following table shows Drake's scores and those of the other top Midwest Master's schools.

### 2006 Faculty Resource Rankings- Top Midwest Master's Universities

University	% of classes under 20	% of classes 50 or more	Student/Fac. ratio	% Full-Time Faculty	Faculty Resource Rank
Creighton	46	5	13/1	92	10
Valparaiso	51	4	13/1	85	15
Xavier	49	1	13/1	74	20
Drake	47	11	15/1	86	23
Bradley	49	4	14/1	84	10

Drake's percent full-time faculty is within the range of scores for the other top institutions. Drake improved from 41% to 46% of classes with enrollments less than 20, while Drake has somewhat less favorable scores for proportion of classes with 50 or more and student/faculty ratio. The percentage of classes enrolling 50 or more increased from 10% to 11% and the student/faculty ratio increased from 14/1 to 15/1.

The overall Faculty Resources rank reflects the somewhat mixed positioning among the five schools. Drake improved from a 2004 ranking of 59 to a rank of 33 in 2005, and a rank of 23 in 2006. This undoubtedly reflects the increase in salaries.

### Student Selectivity

Student selectivity accounts for 15% of an institution's composite score and includes:

SAT/ACT Test Scores	(50%)
First-year students in the top 10% of High School Class	(40%)
Acceptance rate	(10%)

### 2006 Student Selectivity Rankings- Top Midwest Master's Universities

University	SAT/ACT 25 <sup>th</sup> -75 <sup>th</sup> Percentiles	EFR in Top 10% H.S. Class	Acceptance Rate	Selectivity Rank
Creighton	24-28	69%	86%	4
Valparaiso	23-29	65%	81%	5
Xavier	1060-1290	58%	74%	20
Drake	24-29	72%	84%	3
Bradley	23-28	61%	84%	8

Selectivity rankings are based on percent of the entering first-year students who graduated in the top 10% of their class (higher is better) and the percentage of applicants who are accepted by the university (lower is better). As shown in the preceding table, Drake's selectivity scores compare favorably to the other top Midwest schools.

### Financial Resources

The financial resources category accounts for 10% of the composite score and is defined as the average spending per student on instruction, research, student services, and related educational expenditures during the previous two years (2003 and 2004 fiscal years for 2006 report).

### 2006 Student Financial Resources Rankings- Top Midwest Master's Universities

University	Financial Resources Rank
Creighton	1
Valparaiso	12
Xavier	9
Drake	30
Bradley	16

Drake's ranking dropped from the previous year and is significantly lower than that of the other top five institutions. In 2004 the Drake Financial Resources rank was 15, in 2005 it was 22, and in 2006 it was 30.

### Alumni Giving

Giving by alumni accounts for 5% of the institutional score. *U.S. News & World Report* uses alumni giving as an indirect measure of satisfaction. As shown in the following table, Drake's scores are significantly below those of the institutions that ranked higher in the 2005 Midwest rankings.

## 2006 Student Alumni Giving Rankings- Top Midwest Master's Universities

University	Alumni giving rank	Alumni giving rate
Creighton	7	29%
Valparaiso	23	23%
Xavier	4	30%
Drake	46	16%
Bradley	27	21%

### Summary Comments

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Drake University's overall ranking in the 2006 *USNWR* remains strong. The bedrock of that ranking is the reputation for academic quality. There have been significant changes in several areas that will improve our scores in the future. More specifically, a higher ranking in the future is probably dependent upon the following:

- Improve first-year retention by 4%-6%.
- Improve six-year graduation rate by 2% - 5%.
- Maintain or increase percentage of classes under 20 and decrease the proportion of classes with 50 or more.
- Maintain the percentage of students from the top 10% of their class and decrease the acceptance rate.
- Increase resources committed to instruction
- Increase alumni giving rate.

We should not pursue these changes just to improve our ranking. Our focus must be to achieve our mission.

### Keeping Perspective

This final point is critical. While the *US News and World Report* rankings are interesting and important in terms of public relations, they cannot be allowed to determine Drake's educational policy. *U.S. News & World Report* relies on input (resource) measures. They do not directly assess actual student learning or the quality of the student experience. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) does look at those factors. That is the measure that requires more of our attention.

### Aspirant Institutions

Some perspective on changes that must occur if Drake is to improve its positioning on the *US News and World Report* ratings can be gained by looking at the top rated Master's Universities in each of the four regions of the US.

### Number 1 Rated Master's Institutions – Peer Assessment and Graduation Rates

Region	School	Overall Rating	Peer Assessment	EFR Retention	6-yr Grad Rate
North	Villanova	100	4.2	94%	85%
South	Rollins College	100	3.8	85%	62%
MW	Creighton	100	4.1	87%	71%
West	Trinity	100	4.2	89%	76%
	<b>Drake</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>70%</b>

### Number 1 Rated Master's Institutions – Faculty Resources

Region	School	% classes		Stud/Fac. Ratio	% faculty Full-time	Fac. Resource Rank
		under 20	50+			
North	Villanova	41%	4%	12/1	82%	32
South	Rollins College	61%	0%	11/1	92%	1
MW	Creighton	46%	5%	13/1	92%	10
West	Trinity	51%	1%	10/1	92%	1
	<b>Drake</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>15/1</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>23</b>

### Number 1 Rated Master's Institutions – Selectivity

Region	School	SAT/ACT 25 <sup>th</sup> -75 <sup>th</sup> Percentiles	EFR in Top10% H.S. Class	Acceptance Rate	Selectivity Rank
North	Villanova	1170- 1330	80%	53%	3
South	U. of Richmond	1240- 1390	87%	42%	1
MW	Creighton	23-28	69%	88%	3
West	Trinity	1220- 1380	81%	64%	1
	<b>Drake</b>	<b>24-29</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>3</b>

### Number 1 Rated Master's Institutions – Financial Resources and Annual Giving

Region	School	Fin. Resource Rank	Alumni Giving	
		Rank	Rank	Av. Giving
North	Villanova	13	23	25%
South	U. of Richmond	4	7	27%
MW	Creighton	1	10	29%
West	Trinity	2	4	24%
	<b>Drake</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>16%</b>

If we are to approach a number one *US News and World Report* rating, some changes must occur. Not all of the following will need to happen, but we must analyze which actions are most consistent with our mission and values and which might reasonably be accomplished:

- Improve first-year retention by 4%-6%
- Improve six-year graduation rate by 2% to 5%
- Maintain or increase percentage of classes under 20 and decrease the percent over 50

- Maintain the percentage of students from the top 10% of their class and decrease the acceptance rate
- Increase resources committed to instruction
- Increase alumni giving rate

**Keeping Perspective**

This final point is critical. While the *US News and World Report* rankings are interesting and important in terms of public relations, they cannot be allowed to determine Drake's educational policy. *U.S. News & World Report* relies on input (resource) measures. They do not directly assess actual student learning or the quality of the student experience. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) does look at those factors. That is the measure that requires more of our attention.