

Ranking US Graduate Schools Based on the NSF Graduate Fellowships

Various attempts have been made to rank Universities based on different characteristics. In the international field, the best-known are the ones by the Shanghai Jiao Tong University and the Times Higher Education Supplement. In the United States, an evaluation that is well-documented scientifically is that by the National Research Council, which takes place every ten years. Rankings by the US news and World Report are also frequently quoted.

We attempt to rank graduate programs in US Universities on the basis of the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowships. These are highly competitive and highly prestigious fellowships awarded in recognition and support of "outstanding graduate students in the relevant science, technology, engineering, and mathematics disciplines, who are pursuing research-based master's and doctoral degrees" (www.nsfgradfellows.org). This is a simple, well-defined ranking that takes into account the views of those that are awarded these fellowships, as indicated in terms of their choice of the graduate school at which they intend to pursue their graduate studies if they are offered the fellowship.

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The best US universities according to the brightest US students

The TIMES survey emphasized the importance of peer perception in the ranking of universities: prestigious faculty from a variety of universities were asked to rank the universities according to their own perception.

Since most students are awarded a fellowship before being admitted to a particular program, the ranking based on NSF awards can be viewed under two different perspectives: on the one hand we can see how the most brightest *students* (as opposed to the most prestigious faculty) perceive different universities, and on the other hand we can see which universities are able to attract the most brightest students.

should look across different subdisciplines, as well as overall. Stress that these are for the sciences and engineering.