

EDITORS' PICK

The New Ivies: As Employers Sour On The Super-Elite, These 20 Colleges Shine

The Ivy League is losing its standing as America's producer of great talent. Here are the schools producing the hard-working high achievers that employers crave.

For the entirety of America's existence, the Ivy League has provided an essential service. In sorting the best and the brightest upon admission and then rigorously educating them, these "Ancient Eight" universities have provided employers, investors and even voters a meritocratic seal of approval. Some one-third of U.S. presidents and the current Forbes 400 list of richest Americans are Ivy alums, as well as eight sitting members of the Supreme Court.

But as evident just by reading or watching the news, something feels distinctly off on Ivy League campuses. The eight colleges have faced a barrage of complaints in recent years over admissions policies that put together a class of amalgamated specialists instead well-rounded, bright students; grade inflation at top schools Harvard and Yale; and most recently, university officials' responses to on-campus protests against the war in Gaza.


So if the Ivies aren't the Ivies anymore, which schools exactly are? Using an exclusive survey of hiring managers, Forbes introduces the New Ivies—the 10 public universities and 10 ascendant private ones turning out the smart, driven graduates craved by employers of all types.

Our methodology was as follows. After disqualifying the Ivies (and we used the Ivy-plus yardstick, which includes Stanford, MIT, Duke and the University of Chicago, as well as the eight classics Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Brown, Penn, Columbia, Dartmouth and Cornell), we started with 1,743 colleges of at least 4,000 students (understanding that small liberal arts schools have always offered a more boutique experience and are hard to compare with research universities). Using 2022 admissions data, the most recent available, we then screened for schools with high standardized test scores (our New Ivies average a robust 1482 SAT and 33 ACT) and where at least half the applicants supplied the scores, regardless of whether they were required to do so for admission—in other words, places that still rely heavily on objective measures of success.

We also screened with a selectivity yardstick (below a 20% admission rate at private schools, 50% at publics). And then from there, we took the 32 remaining schools and surveyed our hiring manager respondents about each one.

Many of the schools on our list are well known; Johns Hopkins and University of Michigan have long been considered Ivy caliber institutions, while Vanderbilt, Rice and Emory are often referred to as Southern Ivies. Others like New York's Binghamton University are already respected in their geographic areas, but now are attracting wider notice.











Data Research: Rina Torchinsky

	INSTITUTION	STATE	UNDERGRAD ENROLLMENT	ACCEPTANCE RATE	50th PERC. SAT	50th ACT
	Binghamton University	New York	14,752	42%	1430	31
	Georgia Institute of Technology	Georgia	16,183	17%	1480	33
	University of Florida	Florida	32,951	23%	1390	31
	University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign	Illinois	34,354	45%	1440	32
	University of Maryland-College Park	Maryland	28,883	45%	1460	33
	University of Michigan-Ann Arbor	Michigan	31,693	18%	1470	33
	University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill	North Carolina	19,215	17%	1460	32
	University of Texas-Austin	Texas	39,552	31%	1370	30
	University of Virginia	Virginia	17,122	19%	1490	33
	University of Wisconsin-Madison	Wisconsin	33,068	49%	1430	29

THE NEW PRIVATE IVIES

These 10 private schools, located in nine states and Washington D.C., are attracting the smartest students and plaudits from employers. Our analysis excluded schools with fewer than 4,000 students, the eight old Ivies and four Ivy-plus schools—Stanford, MIT, Duke and Chicago.

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	INSTITUTION	STATE	UNDERGRAD ENROLLMENT	ACCEPTANCE RATE	50th PERC. SAT	50th P ACT
	Boston College	Massachusetts	9,964	17%	1490	34
	Carnegie Mellon University	Pennsylvania	6,816	11%	1540	35
	Emory University	Georgia	7,338	11%	1500	33
	Georgetown University	District of Columbia	7,306	12%	1500	34
	Johns Hopkins University	Maryland	5,850	7%	1550	35
	Northwestern University	Illinois	8,652	7%	1530	34
	Rice University	Texas	4,229	9%	1540	35
	University of Notre Dame	Indiana	9,049	13%	1510	34
	University of Southern California	California	21,154	12%	1520	34
	Vanderbilt University	Tennessee	7,109	7%	1530	35