Rankings Updates:

What Institutional Researchers Should Know

Yang Zhang, Director of Institutional Research, University of Hawaii at Mānoa

Robert Morse, U.S. News Best Global Universities Rankings

Ying Cheng, Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU)

Selina Griffin, QS World University Rankings

Duncan Ross, *Times Higher Education* World University Rankings

This document is available through:

https://manoa.hawaii.edu/miro/rankings/

Question1: Please provide a brief overview of different types of rankings under your ranking system (for example, overall institutional ranking, subject ranking, regional ranking, etc.). Please include the name, purpose, and web links of methodology for each specific ranking.

U.S. News: Name: Best Global Universities Rankings (https://www.usnews.com/education/best-global-universities)

Purpose: provide global rankings focused on research performance metrics. Top 1,250 Universities worldwide in 74 countries; Five regional rankings - Africa, Asia, Australia/New Zealand, Europe and Latin America; 42 country rankings; and 22 subjects rankings

Link to Best Global overall methodology (https://www.usnews.com/education/best-global-universities/articles/methodology)

Link to Beset Global Subject Meth. (https://www.usnews.com/education/best-global-universities/articles/subject-rankings-methodology)

Shanghai: Name: Shanghai Ranking's Academic Ranking of World Universities

Purpose: Provide a reliable, transparent and stable system to observe the academic performance of world research universities based on objective indicators and third-party data.

Methodology: http://www.shanghairanking.com/ARWU-Methodology-2017.html

Name: Shanghai Ranking's Global Ranking of Academic Subjects

Purpose: Provide a reliable, transparent and stable system to observe the academic performance of world universities in different subjects based on objective indicators and third-party data.

Methodology: http://www.shanghairanking.com/Shanghairanking-Subject-Rankings/Methodology-for-ShanghaiRanking-Global-Ranking-of-Academic-Subjects-2017.html

TIMES: We produce two broad types of rankings (and subsets of each). The first are based on the World University Ranking – published since 2004 – which focus on research intensive universities across the world. There are currently 1102 ranked universities from 92 countries, including 157 from the USA. We produce subject based rankings derived from the same methodology, and other specialized rankings such as the Young University Ranking (next edition to be released in a week's time) based on universities that are under 50 years old.

The other set of methodologies are our teaching focused rankings. Currently we have the US College Ranking, published in conjunction with the Wall Street Journal, and the Japanese University Ranking. We will be expanding this with the European Teaching Ranking this summer.

QS: The QS World University Rankings began in 2004, and the 2019 edition releasing on June 6th 2018 will mark its 15th edition. QS Rankings are built around the four pillars of: research (using Elsevier's Scopus database), teaching, internationalization and employability. Our continued focus on employability reflects the fact that most students enter university not to become an academic, but because they want to get a job. QS Rankings have a unique insight into what employers think of the universities producing the graduates that they hire.

The QS World University Rankings include the following categories of rankings:

Links to the methodologies can all be found via here http://www.iu.qs.com/university-rankings/ and clicking on the relevant ranking.

Methodologies for the business school rankings can be found

https://www.topmba.com/mba-rankings/methodology-full-time-MBA-rankings-2018

and

https://www.topmba.com/mba-rankings/methodology-business-masters-rankings-2018

Question2: Please discuss the recent changes and new development of your rankings, including new rankings, the expansion and change of methodology of existing rankings.

U.S. News: Main recent changes have been to significantly increase the number of schools in the overall global ranking from top 500 in 2014 to top 1250 in 2017. Also greatly increased number of schools ranked in each subject-resulting in 2100 schools ranked in 2014 in the subjects to 6800 ranked in the subjects in 2017. Made other methodology to emphasize research excellence by adding papers in top 1%. These changes resulted in a very big increase in number or countries with ranked schools from 49 in 2014 to 74 in 2017.

Shanghai: In 2017, we published the Global Ranking of Academic Subjects which covered 52 subjects, making it the largest of its kind. An important feature of this ranking is that the opinions of world's best scholars are taken into account for the first time. However, we did not conduct a reputation survey which usually asks researchers to nominate the best universities, we invited deans, chairs and heads of academic units from the world's Top 100 universities to list the criteria for academic excellence in their fields, such as the most prestigious awards and journals. The answers enable us to construct two objective indicators, namely the number of papers in top journals and the number of staff winning significant awards.

TIMES: There will be only minor changes to the US College Rankings this year, although there will be some enhancements to the value added models. The World University Ranking will also remain largely unchanged – other than in scope, we expect additional universities to pass our thresholds this year. New rankings include a global MBA ranking, and the European Teaching

Ranking. However, we are currently exploring how we can develop the World University Ranking to version 3.0 probably for 2019 or 2020.

QS: The most recent addition to the QS Rankings suite has been the Global MBA and the Business Masters Rankings (currently for Masters in Finance, Management and Business Analytics but will be featuring additional subjects in its September launch). These new business rankings combine indicators into five categories – employability, entrepreneurship and alumni outcomes, return on investment, thought leadership and class & faculty diversity. What sets the QS MBA ranking apart from others in the space is its international size and broad focus. The MBA ranking features 200 institutions across the globe and focuses on employability, entrepreneurship and alumni outcomes, as well as robust calculations on ROI.

Furthermore, the QS World University Rankings itself will publish its 15th edition next week (June 6th), a huge mile stone for both QS and for the world of rankings.

Question3: Please think of a most frequent question you get from institutions, what it is, and what is your response.

U.S. News: In terms of Best Global it's what does it take to qualify to be in the ranking. It's from schools that want to be ranked that don't have enough papers or weren't ranked on usnews.com. Answer is it takes for 2017 ranking 1500 papers 2011-15 to ranking universe and top 1250 were ranked. Basically schools want to appear in the global rankings so they are visible i.e. not invisible.

Shanghai: How can my university participate in your ranking and be ranked among Top 500?

ARWU selects candidate universities based on a series of objective criteria (see the methodology). Universities do not need to apply for ARWU, those who meet the criteria will be automatically included in ARWU database and ranked. But we also add universities into the database upon their request. Now we rank some 1400 universities worldwide every year, we used to publish Top 500 universities but since 2017 we also published those ranked between 501-800. The reason why we do not publish all the universities ranked is because the rankings for universities ranked close to the end of the list may not reflect their real position, they have rankings simply because they are included while others may perform better but are not included.

TIMES: From institutions we usually face questions around the use of reputation in measuring universities. However, a far better question came from a high school junior at SXSW EDU who asked "How should students use rankings?"

QS: We get a lot of interest in and queries about our Academic and Employer reputation surveys; the lynchpin of QS Rankings. An individual survey response is of course, subjective by its very nature but so too is a single citation when viewed in isolation. The academic survey uses in excess of 75,000 responses in its analysis; the employer survey over 40,000 – this makes for a

market leading sample size. The indicators are based on a five year aggregation of responses and are among the most stable of our measures. Responses are thoroughly screened for anomalies and any unusual performance jumps or atypical patters of response are flagged for further scrutiny.

Question4: If you could send only one message to institutional researchers at the 2018 AIR conference, what would that be?

U.S. News: Each of the global rankings in this session uses a different methodology and produces similar results in many ways but there are key differences, too. It's important to understand these differences and similarities in the methodologies and websites when discussing them with campus higher ups.

Shanghai: Indicator performance is much more important than the ranking. Institutional researchers should not only focus on the overall rankings of their universities, they should pay more attention to their universities' performance on each individual indicator. Because (1) the indicator performance can help universities to understand why they are ranked at such positions; (2) the indicator performance allows universities to evaluate the relevance of each indicator to universities' mission, and the relevance of the whole ranking to universities' mission; (3) the indicator performance shows the strength and weakness of universities; (4) the data on each indicator can clearly inform the difference between one university and another, which is useful in setting strategic goals.

TIMES: Don't try to improve in rankings. Try to improve. It's the job of rankers to reflect that improvement.

QS: The most recent Hobsons survey of international students credits the QS Rankings as the rankings most used and referenced by international students. TopUniversities.com attracts over 60 million views a year, with the rankings pages being by far the most popular.

The data submission for consideration in the rankings is straight forward with a minimal amount of data points needed from a university. I would like to see more universities, particularly in the United states, engaging with QS – maximizing your nominations for our employer and academic surveys by speaking to your colleagues and making sure that those you nominate are those academics you have been collaborating with, employers who have on campus presence or provide internships. And if you are really keen, you can sign up yourself via our sign-up facility to participate in the survey.