

MIRO Analysis Brief

Decode UH Mānoa's Rankings



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University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa received global recognition for its research excellence in all four major international rankings’ 2020 top world-class university lists. The prestigious international rankings reflect UH Mānoa’s world-renowned achievements for more than 110 years.

- TIMES World University Rankings (TIMES), which is based in the U.K., ranks UH Mānoa **60** in the United States, and **201-250** globally, out of the 959 institutions that are considered with the best performance in research publication output and impact.
- The Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU), conducted by Shanghai Jiao Tong University, ranked UH Mānoa in the range of **95-114** in the United States, and **301-400** globally, out of the 1300 universities world-wide that have the highest research activity.
- The U.K.-based QS Ranking listed UH Mānoa **62** in the U.S and **333** in the world, out of the more than 4388 universities being considered in the world.
- As the best-known university ranking agency in the U.S., U.S. News and World Report’s Best Global Universities Ranking put UH Mānoa **109** in the U.S. and **378** in the world, out of the 1000 top institutions based on the bibliometric data and the reputation survey results.

International Rankers		Global Ranking	U.S. Ranking
	Academic Ranking of World Universities (China)	301 - 400	95 - 114
	TIMES World University Ranking (UK)	201 - 250	60
	QS World University Rankings (UK)	333	62
	US News Global Universities (US)	378	109

Please see the graph above for a summary of how UH Mānoa was ranked in 2020. UH Mānoa is ranked by different international rankings in the range of 60 and 114 in the U.S., and between 201 and 400 globally. To put these numbers into context, there are more than 4000 universities in the U.S and more than 20,000 universities in the world, which put UH Mānoa in the top 2% globally.

Readers may wonder why UH Mānoa's position can be different among different rankings. One of the reasons is how reputation survey data get used. Some rankings such as QS and USNWR weigh heavily on the reputation surveys, which are surveys sent to scholars and employers to evaluate their academic colleagues or employees from institutions that are being ranked. Hawai'i has unique geographic location and a high percent of alumni choose to stay in the state of Hawai'i. Because reputation surveys are sent to scholars and employers all around the world, our reputation scores in other countries can be lower, which causes rankings that heavily rely on those results to be lower.

In the U.S., people are more familiar with the U.S. News & World Report's Best Colleges Ranking, and often refer to this ranking as the USNWR. However, this specific ranking is only one of many university rankings that USNWR conducts. The best colleges' ranking focuses more on the undergraduate student experience. Measures such as student selectivity and alumni giving play an important role in their ranking methodology. For a public university like UH Mānoa, that has a mission to make the college experience more accessible to Hawai'i residents, certain measures of USNWR's best colleges ranking do not put Mānoa in a fair position to compete with universities that only admit the best performing students. However, among international rankings, measures are more focused on research excellence, using hard data such as research publications and citations. This explains why USNWR ranks Mānoa 170 in the recently released best colleges ranking, and 109 in the U.S. in its own global university ranking.

Different rankings use different methodologies, and each contribute only one perspective of how universities can be ranked. It is recommended to talk about the university's performance using various rankings, instead of focusing on changes in one specific ranking. Considering one of Mānoa's important missions of advancing research to serve the public good and its need to attract students and talent globally, it is recommended that the international rankings are more appropriate to use as benchmarking tools, rather than the USNWR best colleges ranking that the media and public are more familiar with.

Other than a university's overall rankings, rankings at the program and discipline levels also provide important references for students who are seeking education in specific areas. UH Mānoa has many programs that are ranked highly in the world. For example, in the ARWU ranking, Mānoa's Oceanography is ranked 14, and atmospheric science is ranked 16 in the world. In the QS ranking, Mānoa's linguistics is ranked 16 in the U.S. and 43 in the world, and geography is ranked 16 in the U.S., and 35 in the world. U.S. News & World Report (USNWR)'s global ranking ranks Mānoa's geosciences 63 and space science 110 in the world. USNWR's best graduate schools ranking ranked Mānoa's part-time law program 31 and primary care of medicine 56 in the U.S. In addition, the master nursing program is ranked 50 among the online programs in the U.S. by the USNWR best online programs ranking.

Academic Ranking of World Universities (Shanghai Jiao Tong University)

- Oceanography: 14 in the world
- Atmospheric Science: 16 in the world
- Communication: 51 -76 in the world

QS World University Rankings (UK)

- Linguistics – 16 in the U.S. and 43 in the world
- Languages – 24 in the U.S. and 101 -150 in the world
- Earth Sciences - 20 in the U.S. and 44 in the world
- Natural Sciences – 52 in the U.S. and 232 in the World

TIMES World University Ranking (UK)

- Physical Sciences – 93 in the world
- Arts and Humanities – 151 -175 in the world

US News Global Universities (US)

- Geosciences – 63 in the world
- Space Science - 110 in the world
- Graduate Part-time Law Program – 31 in the U.S.
- Graduate Primary Care - 56 in the U.S.
- Doctoral Nursing Program - 74 in the U.S.
- Graduate Clinical Psychology – 88 in the U.S.

For more information, visit MIRO Ranking webpage
<https://manoa.hawaii.edu/miro/rankings/>

If you are interested in learning about how rankers rank universities, please visit the
“Rankings Q&A” section located at the bottom of MIRO’s ranking page.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact MIRO miro@hawaii.edu