

# MIRO Analysis Brief

# Decode UH Mānoa's Rankings



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The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa received global recognition for its research excellence in all four major international rankings' 2021 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 **63** in the United States, and **251-300** globally, out of the 1500 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 **90-110** in the United States, and **301-400** globally, out of the 2000 universities world-wide that have the highest research activity.
- The U.K.-based QS Ranking listed UH Mānoa **62** in the U.S and **340** 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 (USNWR) Best Global Universities Ranking put UH Mānoa **105** in the U.S. and **376** in the world, out of the 1750 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)	<b>301 - 400</b>	<b>90 - 110</b>
	TIMES World University Ranking (UK)	<b>251 - 300</b>	<b>63</b>
	QS World University Rankings (UK)	<b>340</b>	<b>62</b>
	US News Global Universities (US)	<b>376</b>	<b>105</b>

The table above shows that UH Manoa was recognized by four different organizations and ranked between 62-110 in the U.S. and 251-400 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.

A commonly asked question is “why does UH Mānoa’s ranking position differ among the various rankers?” One of the reasons is how the reputation survey data gets used. Some rankings, such as QS and USNWR, weigh heavily on the reputation surveys that are sent to scholars and employers outside the institutions to be ranked to evaluate researchers and employees from those institutions. For UHM, because Hawai'i has a unique geographic location that is away from other places, and a high percent of alumni choose to work in the state, we may not have as many alumni working in other states or foreign countries as our peer institutions. This could result in a lower reputation score and negatively affect our rankings.

Another question that people frequently ask is “Why the same ranking agency may rank a university differently in its different rankings?” Let’s take the rankings published by the U.S. News & World Report (USNWR) as examples. USNWR’s Best Colleges Ranking and the Best Global Universities Ranking are among its most popular rankings. The Best College Ranking is a domestic ranking and only ranks universities in the U.S. It focuses more on the undergraduate student data. Some of the measures, such as student selectivity and alumni giving, play an important role in their ranking methodology. However, these measures do not put Mānoa in a fair position. Because as a public university, UH Mānoa has a mission to make the college experience more accessible to Hawai’i residents, and hence could be disadvantaged when competing with universities that only admit the best performing students. USNWR’s Best Global Universities Ranking is an international ranking which emphasizes the importance of research excellence and heavily relies on research data like publications and citations. UH Mānoa has a great strength in research and hence ranked much better in the Best Global Universities ranking than the Best Colleges ranking, although both are published by USNWR.

Considering Mānoa’s key missions of serving the public good, advancing research, and attracting students and talent globally, we believe the international rankings are more appropriate to use as benchmarking tools than national rankings. In addition, since different rankings use different methodologies and each ranking contributes to only one perspective of how universities can be ranked, it is recommended to look at

the UHM’s performance using various rankings rather than focusing on changes to a specific ranking.

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 atmospheric science is ranked 15 and oceanography is ranked 16 in the world. In the QS ranking, Mānoa’s linguistics is ranked 11 in the U.S. and 28 in the world, and geology is ranked 15 in the U.S., and 24 in the world. USNWR’s Best Global Universities ranking ranks Mānoa’s geosciences 73 and space science 97 in the world. USNWR’s Best Graduate schools ranking ranked Mānoa’s primary care of medicine 24 and part-time law program 28 in the U.S. In addition, the master’s nursing program is ranked 99 among the online programs in the U.S. by the USNWR’s Best Online Programs ranking.

In general, different rankings adopt different methodologies and the pool of institutions being ranked can be different from year to year, so it is recommended that institutions use various ranking results as a way to promote and market the strengths of the institutions.

#### Academic Ranking of World Universities (Shanghai Jiao Tong University)

- Atmospheric Science: 15 in the world
- Oceanography: 16 in the world
- Communication: 51 -75 in the world

#### QS World University Rankings (UK)

- Linguistics – 11 in the U.S. and 28 in the world
- Geology - 15 in the U.S. and 24 in the world
- Geophysics – 16 in the U.S. and 26 in the World
- Languages – 28 in the U.S. and 101 -150 in the world

#### TIMES World University Ranking (UK)

- Arts and Humanities – 126-150 in the world
- Physical Sciences – 151-175 in the world

#### US News Global Universities (US)

- Geosciences – 73 in the world
- Space Science - 97 in the world
- Graduate Primary Care - 24 in the U.S.
- Graduate Part-time Law Program – 28 in the U.S.
- Graduate Medicine: Research – 64 in the U.S.
- Doctoral Nursing Program - 68 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](mailto:miro@hawaii.edu)