



Serving Students and the Public Good:
**HBCUs and the *Washington Monthly's*
College Rankings**

UNCF
Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute
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Executive Summary

For many, the *US News & World Report* college rankings are the gold standard for identifying the country's best institutions of higher learning. But a close analysis of the less well-publicized but highly respected college rankings compiled by the *Washington Monthly* indicates that those rankings may be a better guide to identifying colleges and universities that address one of the nation's most urgent education and economic priorities: helping students from low-income, minority families who are often the first in their family to attend college—in other words, students who often experience the most difficulty staying on the college graduation track—to get the college education they need and that the nation needs them to have.

An analysis of the 2011 college rankings published by the *Washington Monthly* reveals that historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) outperform many non-HBCUs, including some of the country's best known and most prestigious institutions. Thus, among liberal arts colleges, Morehouse and Spelman colleges, both HBCUs, are ranked second and fourth, ahead of Swarthmore and Amherst colleges. HBCU Fisk University is ranked ahead of Oberlin College. Of the 12 HBCUs that appear in the *Monthly's* ranking of liberal arts colleges, 10 are in the top half and four in the top 10 percent.

The *Washington Monthly* rankings are based on higher education institutions' contribution to economic mobility—their ability to improve the economic status of low-income students—and the priority they place on encouraging service by their students and graduates. The rankings reflect predicted and actual graduation rates—the percentage of a college's students who, based on their economic and academic backgrounds, would be expected to graduate, and what percentage actually graduate—a rough gauge of the value the college delivers to economically and academically disadvantaged students and to the country, which needs more college graduates.

Many HBCUs have graduation rates that match and exceed those of many non-HBCUs. Other HBCUs have lower rates, sometimes substantially lower. Such comparisons can be misleading, however, because they do not take into account the socio-economic backgrounds of the students that colleges serve. Since their founding well over a century ago, HBCUs have been dedicated to serving students from low-income families and those whose pre-college education has put them at a disadvantage in doing college coursework.

Forty-six percent of HBCU students, for example, come from families with incomes lower than \$36,000. Fifty percent qualify for Pell Grants, the federal government's largest student-aid program. Forty-three percent come from families in which they are the first to attend college. Thirty-six percent must take at least one developmental education course in college, learning what they should have been taught in high school. HBCUs educate students from the entire socio-economic spectrum but have become especially skilled at educating bright students from low-income families and students whose K-12 education failed to prepare them to succeed in college.

This report discusses the *Washington Monthly's* overall rankings, the social mobility rankings, and the graduation rates of both public and private HBCUs. Two major conclusions are drawn from this analysis:

- Most HBCUs outperform non-HBCUs in the overall and social mobility rankings.
- HBCUs often exceed projections in their ability to graduate disadvantaged students, one of the areas included within the social mobility category. When institutions are rated on the basis of actual versus predicted graduation rates, HBCUs as a group tend to perform as well as or better than other colleges and universities and significantly better than when they are evaluated strictly on the basis of actual graduation rates.



This institutional capacity of HBCUs is absolutely critical to increasing the number of college graduates entering the economy. Students from higher-income backgrounds and students whose pre-college education prepares them for college success are, to a large extent, already on the path that leads to college graduation. Increasing the number of college graduates will require colleges and universities to attract, retain and graduate students who, because of financial obstacles or inadequate pre-college education, are not now on that track. A close analysis of the *Washington Monthly* rankings and the data on which they are based suggests that many HBCUs have exactly that ability.

Students who, because of disadvantage, face long odds in seeking a college education are exactly the students who most need the advantages that come with college, and they are the students the economy most needs to add to the college-educated workforce. They are the very students whose education is the core mission of HBCUs.

To compete in tomorrow's global economy, the United States needs a more college-educated workforce. Institutions of higher education are being held accountable for producing skilled graduates who are able to significantly contribute to helping the U.S. maintain its competitive edge. This report confirms that HBCUs contribute to the social, educational and economic viability of the United States by enrolling and graduating students who are most needed by the economy and who often need the most support. This report finds that HBCUs continue to serve not only the students who attend them, but also the broader economy and society whose continued vitality depends on a diverse, reliable and college-educated workforce.

Rather than ask the usual question “What can a college do for you?” the *Washington Monthly* rankings ask: “What are colleges doing for the country?”





Introduction

The current economic crisis has directed more attention to higher education's responsibility in producing skilled graduates to contribute to the social and economic viability of the United States, both domestically and internationally. With that responsibility in mind, since 2005 the *Washington Monthly* has published an annual college guide that challenges more conventional guides. Rather than ask the usual question "What can a college do for you?" the *Washington Monthly* rankings ask: "What are colleges doing for the country?"

To answer this question, the magazine created college rankings that focus on how institutions serve the greater good through three major criteria—social mobility, research and service. The first criterion, social mobility, examines institutions' ability to serve as an "engine of social mobility" by graduating low-income, Pell-eligible students. The next criterion, research, concerns the amount of dollars spent on research and the number of recipients of bachelor's degrees who pursue Ph.D.s. For the final criterion, service, the *Washington Monthly* weighed institutions' public service commitment, as determined by the percentage of students who serve in ROTC or the Peace Corps and the percentage of funds earmarked for community service.

How do HBCUs stack up against other higher education institutions in this ranking system?

They do very well. In fact, some UNCF member colleges and universities lead the pack.

In the introduction to its 2011 college guide, the *Washington Monthly* singled out four UNCF institutions that rank especially high:

Historically black and single-gender colleges continue to rank well by our measures, as they have in years past. Morehouse and Spelman Colleges in Atlanta rank number two and number four, respectively. ... Dillard and Fisk Universities—both

historically black, and both lower tier according to U.S. News—make our top twenty.

—*Washington Monthly*, Liberal Arts Colleges¹

In this ranking system, Morehouse and Spelman outrank such institutions as Swarthmore, Amherst and Wellesley. Fisk University scores higher than Oberlin and Smith colleges.

Purpose of UNCF Report

Higher education, after all, isn't just important for undergraduates. We all benefit when colleges produce groundbreaking research that drives economic growth, when they offer students from low-income families the path to a better life, and when they shape the character of future leaders. And we all pay for it, through hundreds of billions of dollars in public subsidies. Everyone has a stake in how that money is spent.

—"Introduction: A Different Kind of College Ranking," *Washington Monthly* 2011 College Guide

This report, created jointly by UNCF's Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute and the UNCF Institute for Capacity Building, presents a focused analysis of data featured in the *Washington Monthly's* 2011 College Guide. The focus is particularly on the overall and social mobility rankings. First, we provide an overview of HBCUs' tradition of offering a stellar college education to underserved students. Then, we briefly discuss the purpose of college rankings, provide a glimpse of the growing debates about the usefulness of college rankings, and recount the controversy surrounding the veracity of self-reported information submitted by some institutions to the most popular of the college ranking guides. Next, we present a breakdown of the *Washington Monthly's* rankings related to HBCUs. Finally, we discuss our findings from a comparison of predicted versus actual graduation rates of the HBCUs represented in this college guide.

¹ Business-Higher Education Forum. (2011). *BHEF Policy Brief: Preserving the Federal Pell Grant Program*.



The following sections reveal that data gleaned from the *Washington Monthly College 2011 College Guide and Rankings* support research that demonstrates that when it comes to moving low-income, first-generation, minority students to and through college, HBCUs excel.

HBCUs' Commitment to Social Mobility

At the inception of HBCUs, before the Civil War and during Reconstruction and the Jim Crow era, their main mission was to provide access to higher educational opportunities primarily for African American students, for whom they were often the only post-secondary education option. Later, HBCUs aimed to prepare these students and others for graduate study, careers and leadership roles in society.² HBCUs now welcome and graduate diverse student populations and continue to serve as prime examples of how institutions of higher learning—despite limited resources and continuous questioning of their relevance—can prepare students from various backgrounds for the global economy.

HBCUs have a long-standing commitment to provide educational access to all students. As Brown and Freeman note, these institutions have been dedicated to providing students with educational opportunities “regardless of academic preparation, test scores, socio-economic status, or environmental circumstances,” opportunities that might not otherwise be available to these students.³ Although HBCUs attract incredibly bright students, they also attract students who have yet to reach their academic potential. Many HBCU students were underserved in their K-12 academic preparation for myriad reasons, including low socio-economic backgrounds and substandard educational systems. Forty-six percent of HBCU students, for example, come from families with incomes lower than \$36,000. Fifty percent receive Pell Grants, the federal government’s largest need-

based student-aid program. Forty-three percent come from families in which neither parent attended college.⁴ Despite these challenges, HBCUs have been responsive to the needs of underserved students by providing access, academic support and a culture of care to students at a level unmatched by other institutions.

A forthcoming 2012 study by UNCF’s Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute reports that a significant portion of students attending HBCUs come from low-income backgrounds and tend to be academically less prepared for college than other students.⁵ The report further shows that, when one accounts for the potentially detrimental effects of these student characteristics, HBCUs in the aggregate succeed in retaining and graduating African American students at a higher rate than non-HBCUs.

Considering College Rankings

College rankings, a commonly used tool to report various types of information (e.g., selectivity, reputation) about higher educational institutions, are heavily used by parents and prospective students. However, the metrics used by most college rankings often present a skewed view of HBCUs that fails to capture the distinctive value of these colleges and universities. These rankings “are based on many of the very issues that HBCUs struggle with—resources, alumni giving, and student selectivity—and there is no contextualization of these issues,” notes researcher Marybeth Gasman.⁶ Ultimately, low rankings can discourage prospective students from choosing HBCUs as an option for higher education. A president of one UNCF member institution notes,

If there are people looking at the rankings as a measurement of the quality of an institution, they think [HBCUs] do not have any type of qualities. [The rankings] do not tell you who the best schools are, just the most privileged.⁷

² Lomax, M. (2007). Historically black colleges and universities: Bringing a tradition of engagement into the twenty-first century. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 11 (3).

³ Brown, M.C. III, & Freeman, K. (2002). Guest editors' introduction. *The Review of Higher Education*, 25(3), 241–261.

⁴ 2007–08 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:08). (2009). Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

⁵ Richards, D., & Awokoya, J. (Forthcoming, 2012). Understanding HBCU retention and completion. Fairfax, VA: Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute, UNCF.

⁶ Gasman, M. (2010, August 19). Ranking historically black colleges and universities. [Blog post]. Retrieved from <http://chronicle.com/blogs/innovations/ranking-historically-black-collegesuniversities/26353>

⁷ See Kamara, M. (2007, June 28). Are *U.S. News*' rankings inherently biased against black colleges? *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*.



Most agree that institutions should be held accountable for the quality of higher education they deliver. However, standard college rankings often serve as a misleading tool for determining an institution's ability to meet or exceed student needs and expectations.

Thus, in recent years, many colleges and universities—predominantly white institutions as well as HBCUs and other special-mission institutions—have questioned the data and the methodology used by conventional ranking services. They especially challenge the ways in which metrics of collegiate success (e.g., SAT scores, graduation rates, retention rates) are chosen, measured, collected and reported.⁸ A recent report by the National Association for College Admission Counseling also reveals that the majority of college admissions officers “hold negative opinions of the *U.S. News & World Report*’s undergraduate rankings,” the most popular of the college guides. Nonetheless, they use that publication to gather information about other schools and to market their own institutions.⁹

Meanwhile, the competition to be among the highest ranked colleges and universities has sparked some disturbing behavior. Over the years, some institutions have resorted to manipulating their data to put their institutions in a more favorable light. According to a recent *New York Times* article, “several colleges in recent years have been caught gaming the system—in particular, the avidly watched *U.S. News & World Report* rankings—by twisting the meanings of rules, cherry-picking data or just lying.”¹⁰

Washington Monthly Findings Related to HBCUs

The current report presents a focused analysis of data in the *Washington Monthly* 2011 College Guide and Rankings related to public and private HBCUs. In particular, the emphasis is on where HBCUs stand relative to: 1) the overall rankings of U.S. colleges and universities compiled across the three categories

(social mobility, research and public service); and 2) social mobility—serving the needs of students from underserved communities. Two major conclusions are drawn:

- **HBCUs consistently rank in the top 50 percent of institutions on both the overall ranking and the social mobility ranking.**
- **HBCUs tend to outperform expectations in successfully graduating students from disadvantaged backgrounds, one of the areas included within the social mobility category. When institutions are rated on the basis of actual versus predicted graduation rates, HBCUs tend to perform at an above-average level and significantly better than when they are evaluated strictly on the basis of actual graduation rates.**

The following sections highlight data on HBCUs from the *Washington Monthly*’s 2011 College Guide and Rankings to further raise awareness of the ways in which HBCUs are contributing to the public good. In particular, we examined the publication’s ranked lists of 249 liberal arts colleges (median = 125) and 309 baccalaureate colleges (median = 155).¹¹ These two categories were chosen for their relevance to UNCF’s institutional membership.

For both of these rankings, we highlight those scores and ranks specifically for HBCUs to demonstrate how they compare with the rest of the ranked colleges and universities.

Overall Rankings

The overall ranking created by the *Washington Monthly* positions institutions based on a composite score, derived from three sub-rankings: social mobility, public service and research. On the composite score, 83 percent of the liberal arts HBCUs were above the median. Likewise, in the ranking of 309 baccalaureate

⁸ The presidents of more than 60 of the nation’s colleges and universities signed a letter drafted by the Education Conservancy that protests the *U.S. News & World Report* rankings. Retrieved from http://www.educationconservancy.org/presidents_letter.html. See also Kaplan, M. (2007, June 20). Reaming college rankings. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/marty-kaplan/reaming-college-rankings_b_52995.htm

⁹ A view of the *U.S. News & World* report rankings of undergraduate institutions from the college admission counseling perspective. (2011). National Association for College Admission Counseling.

¹⁰ Perez-Pena, R., & Slotnik, D. (2012, February 1). Gaming the College Rankings. *The New York Times*, p. A14.

¹¹ “Median” is used throughout this report (rather than “average”) to refer to the exact midpoint of a ranking. Colleges that are above the median are, by definition, in the top 50 percent.



colleges, 77 percent of HBCUs were ranked above the median. In other words, most ranked HBCUs were in the top half of the overall rankings. (For a complete list, please see the Appendix.)

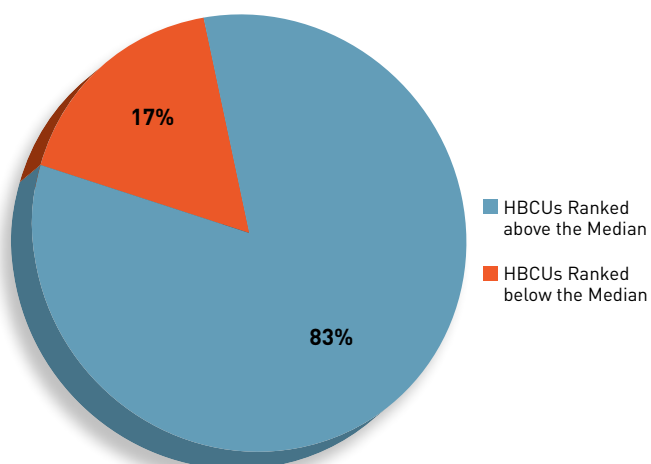
Liberal Arts Colleges Overall Ranking: HBCUs above the Median

Institution	Overall Rank (median=125)	Overall Score
Morehouse College	2	98
Spelman College	4	95
Fisk University	16	79
Dillard University	25	72
Tougaloo College	32	69
Lane College	76	56
West Virginia State University*	77	56
Rust College	82	55
Bennett College for Women	87	54
Huston-Tillotson University	96	53

*Non-UNCF HBCU.

SOURCE: *Washington Monthly's* 2011 College Guide and Rankings

Composite Ranking of Liberal Arts HBCUs



SOURCE: *Washington Monthly's* 2011 College Guide and Rankings

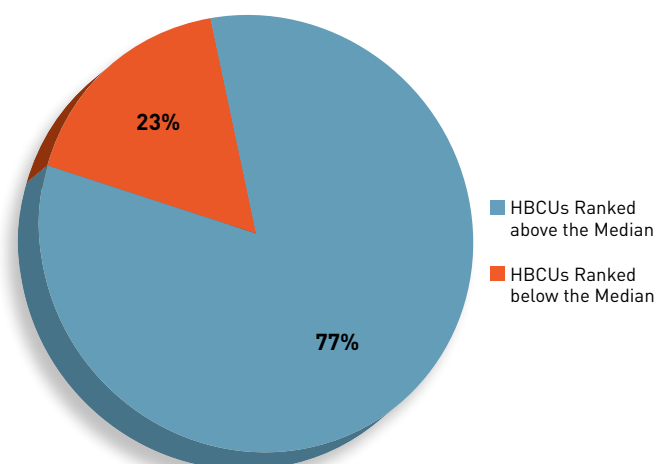
Baccalaureate Colleges Overall Ranking: HBCUs above the Median

Institution	Overall Rank (median=155)	Overall Score
Tuskegee University	1	100
Elizabeth City State University*	5	89
Claflin University	10	79
Benedict College	15	71
University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff*	18	71
Saint Augustine's College	31	67
Stillman College	32	66
Voorhees College	34	64
Wiley College	37	64
Virginia Union University	39	62
Langston University*	41	61
Central State University*	48	59
Shaw University	51	59
Oakwood University	53	59
Kentucky State University*	54	58
Le Moyne-Owen College	79	52
Bethune-Cookman University	83	51
Texas College	122	46
Winston-Salem State University*	139	45
Livingstone College	153	43

*Non-UNCF HBCU.

SOURCE: *Washington Monthly's* 2011 College Guide and Rankings

Composite Ranking of Baccalaureate HBCUs



SOURCE: *Washington Monthly's* 2011 College Guide and Rankings



Social Mobility Rankings

The *Washington Monthly's* social mobility ranking is based on a composite score, derived from the percentage of students at the institution receiving Pell Grants and the institution's actual and predicted graduation rates (particularly the difference between the two, which we computed using the numbers provided by the *Washington Monthly* in its 2011 College Guide and Rankings). In the ranking of 249 liberal arts colleges, 100 percent of the HBCUs included were ranked above the median. Most of the baccalaureate HBCUs were also above the midpoint: among 309 baccalaureate colleges, 85 percent of the HBCUs included were above the median.

Liberal Arts Colleges Social Mobility Ranking: HBCUs above the Median

Institution	Social Mobility Rank (median=125)	Percentage of Students Receiving Pell Grants	Graduation Rate Difference (% points)
Lane College	2	88	1
Tougaloo College	3	93	-9
Spelman College	4	39	31
Bennett College for Women	5	64	26
Fisk University	7	54	16
Morehouse College	8	50	10
Rust College	9	77	3
Dillard University	11	73	-1
Huston-Tillotson University	12	72	0
Johnson C. Smith University	24	56	6
West Virginia State University*	27	63	-5
Jarvis Christian College	76	68	-7

*Non-UNCF HBCU.

SOURCE: *Washington Monthly's* 2011 College Guide and Rankings, with authors' analysis

Baccalaureate Colleges Social Mobility Ranking: HBCUs above the Median

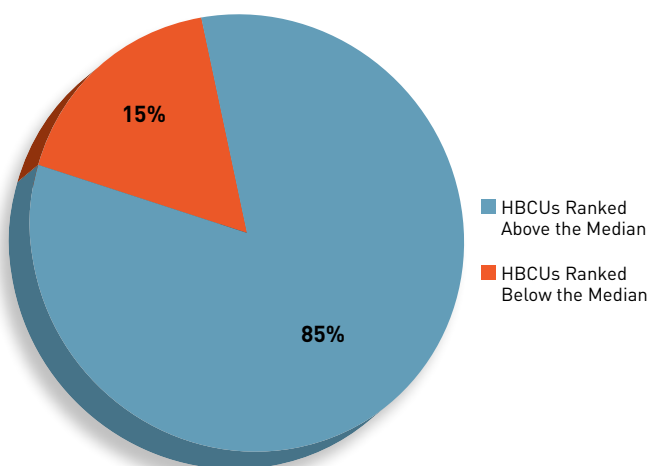
Institution	Social Mobility Rank (median=155)	Percentage of Students Receiving Pell Grants	Graduation Rate Difference (% points)
Claflin University	4	71	17
Wiley College	5	96	8
Tuskegee University	11	67	7
Texas College	12	99	-8
Saint Augustine's College	13	70	27
Elizabeth City State University*	15	66	19
Stillman College	16	82	-4
Benedict College	17	80	14
Bethune-Cookman University	21	70	8
Voorhees College	24	83	8
Shaw University	33	72	14
Le Moyne-Owen College	43	80	-6
Winston-Salem State University*	53	60	5
University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff*	56	72	3
Livingstone College	63	71	8
Virginia Union University	71	63	13
Central State University*	81	75	-1
Langston University*	83	78	-7
Harris-Stowe State University*	104	71	0
Edward Waters College	113	77	-8
Philander Smith College	131	61	-13
Saint Paul's College	154	71	-3

*Non-UNCF HBCU.

SOURCE: *Washington Monthly's* 2011 College Guide and Rankings, with authors' analysis



Social Mobility Ranking of Baccalaureate HBCUs



SOURCE: *Washington Monthly's* 2011 College Guide and Rankings

Graduation Rate Rankings

The *Washington Monthly's* 2011 College Guide and Rankings, using data from the National Center for Education Statistics' Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), included two graduation rate statistics for each institution: an actual (six-year) graduation rate and a predicted graduation rate (which it computed from the percentage of students receiving Pell Grants as well as students' average SAT scores). We present the *Washington Monthly's* graduation rates for HBCUs here, as well as the difference between them, to show how well HBCUs outperform expectations based on whom they enroll and the campus resources available to them. Although the *Washington Monthly* 2011 College Guide and Rankings do not present a ranking of the graduation rate difference, we ranked the institutions on the basis of this graduation rate difference and present the HBCU ranks here.

Consider actual graduation rates in the ranking. For liberal arts colleges, only eight percent of HBCUs are above the median, and for baccalaureate colleges, only 12 percent of HBCUs are above the median. But we argue that six-year graduation rates alone are a poor metric for whether institutions are doing a good job of helping their students graduate. Colleges vary widely in the kind of students they enroll and the

resources they devote to their success, and some students (e.g., those with a higher socio-economic status and more academic preparation) are more likely to graduate within a six-year period regardless of the institution in which they enroll. Disadvantaged or underprepared students may stop out because of financial or academic challenges and thus take longer to earn their baccalaureate degrees. To really assess how well institutions are doing, we have to account for differences in the students they enroll.

To produce its predicted graduation rates for the college rankings, the *Washington Monthly* took into account students' academic preparation by measuring SAT scores and socio-economic status (i.e., whether they receive Pell Grants)—a commonly used model. It must be noted that in recent years, educators across the higher education spectrum have begun to question the validity of some of the most commonly used graduation rate predictors, such as SAT scores. And as it turns out, the predicted versus actual graduation rates of more than half of the HBCUs in the *Washington Monthly* college rankings actually defy the prediction model. As an example, if Spelman College enrolled students who are 52 percent likely to graduate, based on their background and pre-college factors noted, we would expect that institution to graduate 52 percent of those students within six years. Because Spelman's actual graduation rate (83 percent) is in fact higher than this predicted graduation rate, we have a good indication that the institution is outperforming expectations.

Subtracting the actual graduation rate from the predicted graduation rate produces a difference score (31 percentage points, in the case of Spelman) that provides us with a useful indicator of how well the institution is outperforming expectations. This difference score demonstrates which institutions are doing a better job than predicted of graduating their students. For liberal arts colleges, 50 percent of HBCUs are better than the median when the difference between actual and predicted graduation rates is calculated. For baccalaureate colleges, 58 percent of HBCUs score higher than the median.

These rankings drive home two important points: First, it is very important, when evaluating graduation



rates, to take into consideration the characteristics of the students being enrolled. Second, graduation rate calculations are inaccurate if they do not account for sometimes large numbers of students who often require substantial resources to educate. Researchers are raising concerns over the current federal definition for calculating graduation rates, which uses degree completion rates for first-time, full-time students who earn their bachelor's degrees within six consecutive years as the primary measure of institutional performance.¹² According to Ashley et al., this practice places HBCUs at a significant disadvantage because they disproportionately enroll low-income, first-generation, part-time and transfer students—populations whose degree completions cannot be reflected accurately by the current graduation calculations.¹³ Further, these traditional measures provide little insight into the various student-level

characteristics (e.g., pre-college preparation, SAT scores) that may also affect graduation rates.¹⁴

When SAT scores and Pell Grant recipients are taken into account, approximately half of HBCUs rank above the median and half rank below the median. HBCUs fare more poorly in assessments of graduation rates that do not account for SAT scores or Pell recipients, with roughly nine-tenths of HBCUs performing below the median. But this method of assessing performance, regardless of being less favorable, is also less rigorous or realistic, as it ignores differences in the enrolled student populations. Considering the characteristics of their enrolled students, HBCUs are doing much better at getting them through college and into the workforce and graduate schools than we would suppose from graduation rates alone.

HBCU Liberal Arts Colleges Graduation Rates by Ranking above the Median

Institution	Graduation Rate Rank (median=125)	Graduation Rate Difference (% points)	Predicted Graduation Rate	Actual Graduation Rate
Spelman College	1	31	52%	83%
Bennett College for Women	2	26	22%	48%
Fisk University	8	16	41%	57%
Morehouse College	20	10	50%	60%
Johnson C Smith University	59	6	32%	38%
Rust College	108	3	20%	23%

SOURCE: *Washington Monthly's* 2011 College Guide and Rankings, with authors' analysis

These rankings drive home two important points: First, it is very important, when evaluating graduation rates, to take into consideration the characteristics of the students being enrolled. Second, graduation rate calculations are inaccurate if they do not account for sometimes large numbers of students who often require substantial resources to educate.

¹² Nelson, L.A. (2012). Last rites for graduation rate. *Inside Higher Ed*. Retrieved from <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2012/04/12/education-department-changing-graduation-rate-measurements>.

¹³ Ashley, D., Gasman, M., Mason, R., Sias, M., & Wright, G. (2009). *Making the grade: Improving degree attainment at historically black colleges and universities* (HBCUs). Washington, DC: Thurgood Marshall College Fund.

¹⁴ Richards, D., & Awokoya, J. (Forthcoming, 2012). *Understanding HBCU retention and completion*. Fairfax, VA: Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute, UNCF.



HBCU Baccalaureate Colleges Graduation Rates by Ranking above the Median

Institution	Graduation Rate Rank (median=155)	Graduation Rate Difference (% points)	Predicted Graduation Rate	Actual Graduation Rate
Saint Augustine's College	4	27	21%	48%
Elizabeth City State University*	10	19	27%	46%
Claflin University	21	17	30%	47%
Shaw University	38	14	20%	34%
Benedict College	39	14	17%	31%
Virginia Union University	41	13	23%	36%
Bethune-Cookman University	60	8	28%	36%
Voorhees College	61	8	17%	25%
Wiley College	64	8	15%	23%
Livingstone College	70	8	20%	28%
Tuskegee University	78	7	34%	41%
Winston-Salem State University*	93	5	31%	36%
Paul Quinn College*	104	4	8%	12%
University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff*	123	3	22%	25%
Oakwood University	145	1	39%	40%

*Non-UNCF HBCU.

SOURCE: *Washington Monthly's* 2011 College Guide and Rankings, with authors' analysis

Conclusion

As traditional college ranking systems come under greater scrutiny, the *Washington Monthly* College Guide and Rankings provides a fresh and relevant set of metrics for ranking higher education institutions in the United States. As the introduction to the guide states:

Everyone knows that colleges change their policies to climb the U.S. News [College Guide] ladder by rejecting more student applications, hounding alumni for donations, and spending lavish sums on attention-getting buildings and star faculty hires. Imagine if they applied similar ingenuity to the task of improving community service, preparing undergraduates for careers in the sciences, and helping low-income students earn degrees. Colleges that have no chance of climbing the U.S. News status ladder would receive long-overdue recognition, while institutions that have selfishly hoarded their resources would face new pressure to give back.

The *Washington Monthly's* focus on social mobility, research and public service is consistent with the growing emphasis in this country on producing college graduates who are as committed to contributing to the betterment of society as they are to earning a good living.

The fact that HBCUs perform extremely well in the overall ranking and in this guide's category of social mobility is not surprising. Rather, it provides empirical data to support what these institutions have always known: When it comes to providing opportunities for college success for underserved students—in particular those who are first generation and from low-income communities—HBCUs not only stand with but, in many cases, outperform the rest.



Appendix: Ranks and Scores for Liberal Arts HBCUs Ranked in the *Washington Monthly's* 2011 College Guide and Rankings

Liberal Arts Colleges	Overall Score	Rank	Social Mobility			
			Students Receiving Pell Grants	Predicted Graduation Rate	Actual Graduation Rate	Rank
Bennett College for Women	54	87	64%	22%	48%	2
Dillard University	72	25	73%	29%	28%	160
Fisk University	79	16	54%	41%	57%	8
Huston-Tillotson University	53	96	72%	29%	29%	139
Jarvis Christian College	38	186	68%	18%	11%	203
Johnson C. Smith University	48	128	56%	32%	38%	59
Lane College	56	76	88%	24%	25%	127
Morehouse College	98	2	50%	50%	60%	20
Rust College	55	82	77%	20%	23%	105
Spelman College	95	4	39%	52%	83%	1
Tougaloo College	69	32	93%	51%	42%	214
West Virginia State University*	56	77	63%	33%	28%	189

*Non-UNCF HBCU.

When it comes to providing opportunities for college success for underserved students—in particular those who are first generation and from low-income communities—HBCUs not only stand with but, in many cases, outperform the rest.

Appendix: Ranks and Scores for Baccalaureate HBCUs Ranked in the *Washington Monthly's* 2011 College Guide and Rankings

Baccalaureate Colleges	Rank	Overall Score	Social Mobility			
			Students Receiving Pell Grants	Predicted Graduation Rate	Actual Graduation Rate	Rank
Benedict College	15	71	80%	17%	31%	39
Bethune-Cookman University	83	51	70%	28%	36%	60
Bluefield State College*	173	41	56%	34%	22%	270
Central State University*	48	59	75%	20%	19%	174
Claflin University	10	79	71%	30%	47%	21
Edward Waters College	227	35	77%	20%	12%	242
Elizabeth City State University*	5	89	66%	27%	46%	10
Harris-Stowe State University*	193	39	71%	21%	21%	161
Kentucky State University*	54	58	51%	31%	24%	231
Langston University*	41	61	78%	21%	14%	235
Le Moyne-Owen College	79	52	80%	22%	16%	229
Livingstone College	153	43	71%	20%	28%	70
Oakwood University	53	59	33%	39%	40%	145
Paul Quinn College	290	25	76%	8%	12%	104
Philander Smith College	226	35	61%	34%	21%	275
Saint Augustine's College	31	67	70%	21%	48%	4
Saint Paul's College	264	31	71%	20%	17%	190
Shaw University	51	59	72%	20%	34%	38
Stillman College	32	66	82%	25%	21%	203
Texas College	122	46	99%	16%	8%	245
Tuskegee University	1	100	67%	34%	41%	78
University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff*	18	71	72%	22%	25%	123
Virginia Union University	39	62	63%	23%	36%	41
Voorhees College	34	64	83%	17%	25%	61
Wiley College	37	64	96%	15%	23%	64
Winston-Salem State University	45	139	60%	31%	36%	93

*Non-UNCF HBCU.



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