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Illinois Wesleyan Moves Up In Best Colleges Rankings

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The beginning of the new school year is when a number of national magazines and college guides publish what they often call their guide to America's best colleges. This is no small task when one considers that there are nearly 4,000 colleges and universities across the nation and each of these so-called rankings defines quality in its own unique and imperfect way.

Following is a brief summary and some perspectives on how Illinois Wesleyan has fared this ranking season in four of the most notable rankings: *U. S. News and World Report*, *Washington Monthly*, *Princeton Review*, and the upcoming *Kiplinger's Personal Finance*. [See what additional guidebooks say.](#)

U.S. News & World Report

In the *U.S. News & World Report* 2013 rankings, Illinois Wesleyan moved up five places to 65th among the 240 the national liberal arts colleges grouping. Even more noteworthy, the data that *U.S. News* gathers to compile its rankings places the University in the top 50 nationally in two important measures of institutional quality: student selectivity, where we rank 50th, and graduation and retention rates, where we hold the 48th position.

Illinois Wesleyan became a part of these rankings in 1985, the second year they were published. Before moving into the national liberal arts colleges grouping in 1993, Wesleyan was ranked the No. 1 Midwestern University, a position it held since 1989.

Washington Monthly

Illinois Wesleyan has steadily moved up in these rankings and in 2013 advanced three places to No. 47 among the 255 liberal arts colleges that are ranked. In addition, in a new *Washington Monthly* value ranking dubbed the "Best Bang for the Buck" ranking, Wesleyan was No. 47.

Washington Monthly is a relative newcomer, in its eighth year of publishing. The magazine's college rankings are based on three criteria: recruiting and graduating low-income students, producing cutting-edge scholarship and graduates moving on to earn PhDs, and civic engagement. The value ranking also considers loan indebtedness and default rates.

Princeton Review

This year marks Illinois Wesleyan's 24th consecutive appearance in the *Princeton Review*'s listing of America's Best Colleges. In addition to the main listing, *Princeton Review* also compiles rankings for various academic, campus life, and extracurricular and other aspects of the college experience. In 2013, Illinois Wesleyan also was recognized for having the 16th Most Popular Study Abroad program and the 17th Best College Theatre.

Kiplinger's

Illinois Wesleyan has been part of *Kiplinger's* best value listing for eight consecutive years, ranking 54th in 2012-13, published in December 2012. The latest rankings should appear in the coming months.

Kiplinger's creates its value rankings using a combination of quality and cost measures, which include such things as: admissions rate, cost and financial aid, loan indebtedness, graduation rate, retention rate and student to faculty ratio.

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