

OUR 18TH ANNUAL RANKINGS

Maclean's evaluation of overall academic excellence at universities across the country

BY MARY DWYER • Now in its 18th year of ranking, *Maclean's* continues its mandate to provide basic, essential information in a comprehensive package to help students choose the university that best suits their needs. The annual rankings assess Canadian universities on a diverse range of factors, from spending on student services and scholarships and bursaries, to funding for libraries and faculty success in obtaining national research grants. *Maclean's* surveys universities with a focus on the undergraduate experience, and an intent to offer an overview of the quality of instruction and services available to students at public universities across the country.

Maclean's places universities in one of three categories, recognizing the differences in

types of institutions, levels of research funding, the diversity of offerings, and the range of graduate and professional programs. Primarily Undergraduate universities are largely focused on undergraduate education, with relatively few graduate programs. Those in the Comprehensive category have a significant amount of research activity and a wide range of programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels, including professional degrees. Medical Doctoral universities offer a broad range of Ph.D. programs and research. In addition, all universities in this category have medical schools, which sets them apart in terms of the size of research grants.

In each category, *Maclean's* ranks the institutions on a range of factors—or performance

indicators—in six broad areas (weightings are in parentheses). Primarily Undergraduate and Comprehensive universities are ranked on 13 performance measures; Medical Doctoral universities are ranked on 14. Figures include data from all federated and affiliated institutions. The magazine does not rank schools with fewer than 1,000 full-time students or those that are restrictive due to a religious or specialized mission.

The ranking process begins in the spring when thousands of reputational surveys are sent to university officials, high-school principals and guidance counsellors, heads of organizations, CEOs and corporate recruiters across the country, asking for their views on quality and innovation at Canadian uni-



PHOTOGRAPHS (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) BY IAN BARRETT, SIMON HAYTER AND YVONNE BERG



MAKING THE MOST OF IT: Students at McGill; the campus at Queen's (right); taking to the field at Toronto (bottom right)

versities. During the course of the summer, *Maclean's* collects information on dozens of student and faculty awards from 44 administering agencies.

The *Maclean's* rankings are based on the most recent and publicly available data. Student and faculty numbers are obtained from Statistics Canada, as are data for all five financial indicators—operating budget, spending on student services, scholarships and bursaries, library expenses and acquisitions—as well as total research income. For the social sciences and humanities research grants indicator and the medical/science research grants indicator, data for fiscal year 2007-2008 are received directly from the three major federal granting agencies: the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Natural Sci-



Medical Doctoral ranking

The *Maclean's* ranking takes a measure of the undergraduate experience, comparing universities in three peer groupings. Those in the Medical Doctoral category have a broad range of Ph.D. programs and research, as well as medical schools.

OVERALL RANKING		STUDENTS & CLASSES		FACULTY			RESOURCES		STUDENT SUPPORT		LIBRARY				REPUTATION	
	LAST YEAR	STUDENT AWARDS	STUDENT/FACULTY RATIO	AWARDS PER FULL-TIME FACULTY	SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES GRANTS	MEDICAL/SCIENCE GRANTS	TOTAL RESEARCH DOLLARS	OPERATING BUDGET	SCHOLARSHIPS & BURSARIES (% OF BUDGET)	STUDENT SERVICES (% OF BUDGET)	EXPENSES	ACQUISITIONS	HOLDINGS PER STUDENT	TOTAL HOLDINGS	REPUTATIONAL SURVEY	
1	McGill	(1)	1	5	2	1	4	5	9	3	11*	4*	10	8	7	1
2	Queen's	(2)	2	12	1	9	3	4	1	2	9	8*	5	1	4	6
*2	Toronto	(4)	5	14	3	4	1	1	8	7	7	1	7	5	1	4
4	UBC	(2*)	3	3*	4	2	5	9	11	9*	10	13	2	4	3	3
5	Alberta	(5)	6	10	5	6*	6	2	5	6	15	4*	12	2	2	2
6	McMaster	(6)	7	8	9	6*	10	3	4	11	6	14	15	10	12	5
7	Calgary	(10)	8	2	12	13	11	11	2	12*	1	11	1	6	6	13
8	Dalhousie	(8*)	4	1	8	12	13	14	6	1	14	12	11	9	14	11
9	Saskatchewan	(11)	15	3*	11	15	14	12	3	12*	11*	2*	3*	3	8	8
10	Ottawa	(8)	10	15	6	5	2	6	12	4	4	7	6	11	10	14
10	Western	(7)	12	11	10	10	9	10	7	5	5	10	3	7	5	9
12	Laval	(12*)	9	9	13	8	8	8	15	9*	8	6	8	13	11	12
13	Montréal	(14)	11	13	7	3	7	7	14	8	13	8*	13	15	9	10
14	Sherbrooke	(12*)	13	6	14	14	15	15	13	15	2	15	9	14	15	7
15	Manitoba	(15)	14	7	15	11	12	13	10	14	3	2*	14	12	13	15

*Indicates a tie



HOW THE WEST WAS WON: Simon Fraser's modernist, mountaintop campus; sharing ideas by the fountain at Victoria (right)



PHOTOGRAPH BY SIMON HAYTER

PHOTOGRAPH BY DEDEDA STEMLER

ences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. The Canadian Association of Research Libraries and its regional counterparts provide figures used for the library holdings indicators. Financial and library figures are for the fiscal year 2006-2007; student and faculty numbers are for 2005-2006.

Beginning on page 132, you will also find display tables of additional data, such as enter-

ing grade averages and graduation rates—information that, surprisingly, not all universities are willing to make public. *Maclean's* obtains the figures in this section directly from universities, from university websites—whenever such data are available and comparable—as well as from Common University Data Ontario (CUDO), an initiative of the Council of Ontario Universities.

The rankings are weighted as follows:

STUDENTS/CLASSES (20% of final score) *Maclean's* collects data on the success of the student body at winning national academic awards (weighted 10 per cent) over the previous five years. The list covers 38 fellowship and prize programs, encompassing nearly 16,000 individual awards. The count includes such prestigious awards as the Rhodes Scholarships, the Fulbright awards, as well as scholarships from professional associations and the

three federal granting agencies. Each university's total of student awards is divided by its number of full-time students, yielding a count of awards relative to each institution's size.

Maclean's also measures the number of full-time-equivalent students per full-time faculty member (10 per cent). This student/faculty ratio includes all students, graduate as well as undergrads.

FACULTY (18%) In assessing the calibre of faculty, *Maclean's* calculates the number who have over the past five years won major national awards, including the distinguished Killam, Molson and Steacie prizes, the Royal Society of Canada awards, the 3M Teaching Fellowships and nearly 40 other award programs covering a total of 818 individual awards (six per cent). To scale for institution size, the award count for each university is divided by each school's number of full-time faculty.

In addition, the magazine measures the success of faculty in securing research grants

from each of the three major federal granting agencies: the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. *Maclean's* takes into account both the number and the dollar value received in the previous year, and divides the totals by each institution's full-time faculty count. Research grants are reported by how many are awarded to the primary investigator on a project. Social sciences and humanities grants (six per cent) and medical/science grants (six per cent) are tallied as separate indicators.

RESOURCES (12%) This section examines the amount of money available for current expenses per weighted full-time-equivalent student (six per cent). Students are weighted according to their level of study—bachelor, master's or doctorate—and their program of study.

To broaden the scope of the research pic-

Weightings of Indicators

Maclean's ranks universities on 13 or 14 performance measures, according to peer grouping, and then allocates the appropriate weights to those measures.

STUDENTS/CLASSES	20%
Student Awards	10%
Student/Faculty Ratio	10%
FACULTY	18%
Awards per Full-time Faculty	6%
Social Sciences and Humanities Grants	6%
Medical/Science Grants	6%
RESOURCES	12%
Total Research Dollars	6%
Operating Budget	6%
STUDENT SUPPORT	13%
Scholarships & Bursaries	6.5%
Student Services	6.5%
LIBRARY	15%
Expenses	5%
Acquisitions	5%
Holdings per Student	4% to 5%
Total Library Holdings†	1%
REPUTATION	22%
Reputational Survey	22%

†Medical Doctoral category only

ture, *Maclean's* also measures total research dollars (six per cent). This figure, calculated relative to the size of each institution's full-time faculty, includes income from sponsored research, such as grants and contracts, federal, provincial and foreign government funding, as well as funding from non-governmental organizations.

STUDENT SUPPORT (13%) To evaluate the assistance available to students, *Maclean's* examines the percentage of the budget spent on student services (6.5 per cent) as well as

Comprehensive ranking

The *Maclean's* ranking takes a measure of the undergraduate experience, comparing universities in three peer groupings. Those in the Comprehensive category have a significant amount of research activity and a wide range of programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels, including professional degrees.

OVERALL RANKING	LAST YEAR	STUDENTS & CLASSES		FACULTY			RESOURCES		STUDENT SUPPORT		LIBRARY			REPUTATION	
		STUDENT AWARDS	STUDENT/FACULTY RATIO	AWARDS PER FULL-TIME FACULTY	SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES GRANTS	MEDICAL/SCIENCE GRANTS	TOTAL RESEARCH DOLLARS	OPERATING BUDGET	SCHOLARSHIPS & BURSARIES (% OF BUDGET)	STUDENT SERVICES (% OF BUDGET)	EXPENSES	ACQUISITIONS	HOLDINGS PER STUDENT	REPUTATIONAL SURVEY	
1	Simon Fraser	(2)	2	5	1	1	1	5	1	7	3	6	3	8	3
*1	Victoria	(1)	5	4	3	5	2	2	4	3	5	3	5	2	4
3	Waterloo	(3)	1	8	2	2	3	3	11	1	9	8	7	10	1
4	Guelph	(4)	6	6	9	3	6	1	8	5	4	10	2	7	2
5	Memorial	(5)	7	2	8	10	11	6	2	9	10*	1	10	3	5
5	New Brunswick	(5)	3	1	7	9	10	7	6	11	7	2	8	1	7
7	Carleton	(7)	4	9	5	6	4	4	9	2	6	5	11	9	10
8	Windsor	(10)	10	7	6	8	5	9	5	6	1	6*	1	4	11
9	Regina	(9)	11	3	11	11	9	8	3	8	10	4	4	5	9
9	York	(8)	8	11	4	7	8	10	7	4	2	9	6	11	8
11	Concordia	(11)	8*	10	10	4	7	11	10	10	8	11	9	6	6

*Indicates a tie



SWEET MUSIC: Creating an environment where students excel; a Mount Allison music class and UNBC's striking northern setting (right)

scholarships and bursaries (6.5 per cent). Expenditures are measured as they are reported to the Canadian Association of University Business Officers.

LIBRARY (15%) This section assesses the breadth and currency of the collection. Universities receive points for the number of

volumes and volume equivalents per number of full-time-equivalent students (five per cent for Primarily Undergraduate and Comprehensive, four per cent for Medical Doctoral). The total holdings measurement is used in the Medical Doctoral category (one per cent), acknowledging the importance of extensive on-campus collections in those universities.

As well, *Maclean's* measures the percentage of a university's operating budget allocated to library services (five per cent) and the percentage of the library budget spent on updating the collection (five per cent). In acknowledging a shift from the traditional library model—books on shelves—to an electronic access model, *Maclean's* captures spend-

ing on electronic resources in both the library expenses and acquisitions measurements.

REPUTATION (22%) This section reflects a university's reputation in the community at large. For the reputational survey (22 per cent), respondents rated the universities in three categories: Highest Quality, Most Innovative, and Leaders of Tomorrow. Best Overall represents the sum of the scores.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Until 2007, the *Maclean's* rankings included

additional indicators. The number was reduced last year as some universities refuse to disclose even such basic information as retention rates and average entering grades. Still, for those universities that have made public this data, *Maclean's* publishes those numbers here in order to provide students with the widest range of information possible.

As a measure of student quality, *Maclean's* presents incoming students' average high-school grades. The figures are for full-time students attending university in their home province. No conversion formula is applied to incoming grade averages to adjust for provincial differences or varying admission policies, although CÉGEP grades are converted from an R score to a percentage grade. As well, it should be noted that certain universities, to enhance accessibility, accept students with lower grades.

To provide a more detailed picture of grade averages, *Maclean's* displays grades divided into six grade ranges, extending from less than 70 per cent to 95 per cent and higher.

As a measure of drawing power, *Maclean's* counts the proportion of out-of-province students in the first-year undergraduate class, and the proportion of first-year international students.

In taking stock of retention rates, *Maclean's* asks for the percentage of full-time, first-year students who return in second year. While

many factors can affect a student's choice not to return—personal considerations, or a decision to transfer to a program unavailable at their home university—student retention, on the whole, reflects a university's success in keeping its students on course.

Maclean's also measures graduation rates by tracking an incoming cohort of full-time, first-year undergraduate students to determine if they received a degree within seven years. The graduation numbers include students in three-year programs, as well as those in such second-entry programs as medicine, law and education—programs that have a highly selective admissions process. As such, the number of these programs at any given university can affect the overall graduation rate.

In assessing faculty, *Maclean's* counts the percentage of full-time instructional faculty members who have a Ph.D., a first professional degree or a terminal degree in their field.

Finally, in taking a look at the classroom experience, *Maclean's* presents figures on average undergraduate class sizes at the first- and second-year level, as well as at the third- and fourth-year level. **M**

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Customize your own ranking using the Personalized University Ranking Tool. Go to macleans.ca/oncampus and click "Rankings." Choose your own weights and indicators from our exclusive database.

Primarily Undergraduate ranking

The *Maclean's* ranking takes a measure of the undergraduate experience, comparing universities in three peer groupings. Those in the Primarily Undergraduate category are largely focused on undergraduate education, with relatively few graduate programs.

PHOTOGRAPH BY TOBIN GRIMSHAW

PHOTOGRAPH BY RICK COLLINS

OVERALL RANKING		STUDENTS & CLASSES		FACULTY			RESOURCES		STUDENT SUPPORT		LIBRARY			REPUTATION	
	LAST YEAR	STUDENT AWARDS	STUDENT/FACULTY RATIO	AWARDS PER FULL-TIME FACULTY	SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES GRANTS	MEDICAL/SCIENCE GRANTS	TOTAL RESEARCH DOLLARS	OPERATING BUDGET	SCHOLARSHIPS & BURSARIES (% OF BUDGET)	STUDENT SERVICES (% OF BUDGET)	EXPENSES	ACQUISITIONS	HOLDINGS PER STUDENT	REPUTATIONAL SURVEY	
1	Mount Allison	(1*)	1	4	11*	16	6	18	7	6	15*	2	11	1	3
2	UNBC	(4*)	3	6	3	1	4	1	2	16	11	4	3	18	8
3	Acadia	(1*)	2	5	14	13	10	12	4	10*	6	6*	16	6	5
4	St. Francis Xavier	(3)	7*	7	5	11	14	4	12	10*	12	12*	6	12	2
5	Wilfrid Laurier	(6*)	14*	16	6	6	3	17	14	3	9	6*	8*	13	4
6	Trent	(4*)	6	18	1	5	1	5	13	1	5	12*	18	15	12
7	Lethbridge	(6)	11	8	11*	12	2	6	6	21	19*	12*	13	10	7
*7	UPEI	(8)	4	3	7	10	17	3	5	15	21	19	5	8	11
9	Winnipeg	(9)	5	13	15	7	9	15	9	17*	7	10	10	20	6
10	Saint Mary's	(11*)	7*	19	9	2	7	7	15	8*	4	12*	19	14	9
11	Brandon	(18)	10	1	4	17*	15*	16	1	20	2	3	20	2	16
11	Lakehead	(11)	9	12	16	3	8	2	17	2	13	5	2	9	19
13	Ryerson	(11*)	19*	20	18	8*	12	13	11	12	17	20	4	21	1
14	Brock	(15*)	16*	17	10	8*	5	10	18	7	3	17	17	19	10
15	Moncton	(11)	12	2	17	14	19	11	10	14	19*	8	7	3	15
15	Mount Saint Vincent	(15)	19*	10	2	4	20	14	16	13	18	12*	8*	5	14
17	Bishop's	(17)	14	11	8	21	15*	20	3	17*	15*	1	1	7	17
17	Laurentian	(10)	13	9	11	17*	11	8	8	4*	14	11	15	11	20
19	St. Thomas	(18*)	21	15	19*	15	N/A	21	21	4*	1	9	12	4	13
20	Nipissing	(20)	16*	21	19*	19	13	19	19	8*	8	18	21	17	18
21	Cape Breton	(21)	18	14	19*	20	18	9	20	19	10	21	14	16	21

*Indicates a tie