



University of Wisconsin System

Measuring Up 2004: The State Report Card on Higher Education

National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education

Summary — September 2004

RANKINGS FOR WISCONSIN

CATEGORY	GRADE	CHANGE OVER DECADE
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PREPARATION	B+	IMPROVED
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(Preparing young people for college enrollment and success)

PARTICIPATION	B	DECLINED
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(Proportion of population who have access to higher education)

AFFORDABILITY	D	NEUTRAL
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(Ability to pay for college when financial aid and family income are considered)

COMPLETION	A-	IMPROVED
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(Students earning degrees/certificates in a timely manner)

BENEFITS	C+	IMPROVED
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(Proportion of state residents with college degree)

WISCONSIN RANKINGS IN PERSPECTIVE

Wisconsin ranks near the top in **preparation** because it has one of the best K-12 systems in the nation, and the state has invested in K-12 heavily during the past decade.

Wisconsin has slipped in **participation**, but still ranks near the top of the states, with just 11 states scoring higher. Declining high school graduation rates in Wisconsin and declining participation among lower-income residents are exacerbating this trend.

Although Wisconsin scores a “D” for **affordability**, only three states – California, Minnesota and Utah – rank higher. More available financial aid in Minnesota places it ahead of Wisconsin, even though its public university tuition is higher. Report indicates that Wisconsin has “held the line” on share of family income needed to attend its public, two-year colleges.

Wisconsin ranks among the top 10 states in **completion**, which tracks the university’s strong push over the past decade to improve retention and graduation rates.

Although Wisconsin has improved in **benefits** in the past ten years, it ranks in the bottom 40 percent of states because the percentage of residents with a college degree (25%) is well below the national average. Report notes that small percentage of bachelor’s degree holders “substantially weakens the state economy.”