

Andrews University Enrollment and Rankings Report

A measure of progress, success and challenges

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Students enjoying the Andrews University campus (Photo by Julia Viniczay, University Communication student photographer)

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As the 2019 fall semester concluded on the Berrien Springs campus, and also at partner locations and with individual distance education students around the world, Andrews University took the measure of its progress, success and challenges through a variety of internal and external measures and statistics.

Enrollment

One way to measure the Andrews University enrollment is through fall census numbers, which offer a snapshot of students who enroll at (or through) the Berrien Springs campus. For fall 2019, that census showed that there were 3,412 students enrolled through the Berrien Springs campus. This includes 1,708 undergraduates and 1,704 graduates. Of the undergraduate population, 271 students are postgraduate, undeclared and high school students taking University courses.

Overall enrollment increased by five students over last year's numbers. This stability and a small increase are significant amidst a national environment of declining higher education enrollments, including the North American Adventist higher education system, where only three Adventist colleges and universities grew in enrollment this year (the largest increase was at Canada's Burman University, with a headcount increase of 12 students).

In turn, Andrews University's average fall semester enrollment has increased by 45 over the last four years.

While overall international student numbers have been impacted by visa challenges, an increasing number of students are coming to Andrews from international transfer partnerships and other agreements, including growing numbers of undergraduate and graduate students from Asia and Africa.

Additionally, the current Andrews University student population includes increasing numbers of high school students who are taking University courses, mostly online, while in the last two years of secondary school. More than 200 secondary students are now taking Andrews University coursework, a number that has nearly doubled in the last five years.

Finally, in addition to a slight increase in overall headcount enrollment this fall semester, the mix of total credit hours taken (nearly 34,000 credit hours, with 2,334 academic full-time equivalents—a calculation that converts credit hours into an equivalent number of students studying full-time) met budget expectations for the year.

However, fall semester enrollment, which is measured each year on Census Day (10 days after the final add/drop date for the semester) is only one way to measure Andrews University's overall enrollment. A more accurate way to measure enrollment in any given year is to look at an annual unduplicated headcount, which documents the number of students who study at Andrews or through its partners and online education options in a given 12-month timeframe.

In the most recent report, the unduplicated headcount showed that there were 4,735 students who registered for their studies (including online courses) through the Berrien Springs campus of Andrews University.

The report also documents the number of additional students who register through international off-campus programs and the professional development programs offered by the College of Education & International Services. In the most recent report, 3,842 students were part of these groups.

Those numbers combined represent an annual unduplicated headcount of 8,577 students for Andrews University (including main campus, distance, off-campus U.S. programs, international off-campus programs and the School of Education distance programs in Professional Development).

"Our current enrollment challenges and opportunities reflect those of our entire North American Adventist higher education system and higher education as a whole in the United States," says Andrea Luxton, president.

“At Andrews, we have been working to assure stability and much needed growth, even in this challenging context of threats to higher education. As a result, we will need to assure that we remain committed to streamlining and strengthening our finances and our academic structures.

“We also need to clearly and effectively communicate Andrews’ unique strengths to those we educate, including the ‘World Changers Made Here.’ theme which describes the distinct aspiration of this University community. We need to attract and enroll a growing number of increasingly diverse groups of students, online and in person, both here in Michigan and around the world. Those partnerships and efforts may sometimes have small scale results—for example, a dozen students from Hong Kong Adventist College or an expanded pathway program for entering students which may bring an additional 25 to 30 undergraduates in a given year.

“Those efforts are combined with an ongoing and expanding commitment to meet those students’ educational needs, not only during the traditional path of undergraduate and graduate studies but also while our students are still in elementary and secondary school and to continue throughout these students’ careers.

“In the end, we need to be fully committed to what is a God-inspired mandate for this University, its employees and our students: to become truly effective ‘World Changers’ for God as individuals and as a global Andrews University community.

Rankings

In addition to taking measure of the fall semester and year-round census of students, the fall season is also a time when a wide array of school rankings is released, ranging from those that measure specific disciplines to the more well-known rankings, such as U.S. News Best Colleges, Wall Street Journal/Times Higher Education College Rankings, College Factual (in collaboration with USA Today), Niche, Forbes Best Colleges and others

In the perhaps best-known ranking system, U.S. News Best Colleges, Andrews University continues to be the only Seventh-day Adventist university recognized as a national university for its distinguished research and range of bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees.

In those 2020 U.S. News Best Colleges rankings, Andrews University is also the only national university that ranks in the Top Ten lists for ethnic diversity (#2) and most international students (#8). Those rankings are a small improvement over last year when Andrews was ranked 3rd in ethnic diversity and 10th in most international students in the 2019 U.S. News Best Colleges rankings.

“These rankings help confirm Andrews University is blessed with remarkable diversity. As the rankings show, there is no other public or private national university that ranks as high in both overall ethnic diversity and numbers of international students,” says Michael Nixon, vice president for Diversity & Inclusion.

“However, at Andrews, we seek not only to achieve representational diversity but also to effectively pursue an agenda of transformational inclusive diversity. We seek to effectively explore how diverse peoples have enriched the human experience and develop the interpersonal abilities

to respect, appreciate and interact with those of different races, ethnicities, genders, ages, abilities, experiences and backgrounds. This robust learning environment really equips our students for service to a diverse and global community—to truly be World Changers.”

Other significant annual rankings for Andrews University include the following:

- Wall Street Journal/Times Higher Education lists just over 800 institutions on its annual list (which represents roughly 15 percent of the more than 5,000 universities and colleges in the U.S.). With a #368 ranking, Andrews University ranks in the top 50 percent of that list.
- Only 650 universities and colleges are included in Forbes America’s Top Colleges (which lists just over 10 percent of American universities and colleges), and Andrews University is ranked #446.
- College Factual’s rankings are based, in particular, on graduation and retention rates, student loan default rates and early and mid-career earning of graduates. In these rankings, Andrews University was ranked as #582, or in the top 35 percent of more than 1,700 universities and colleges ranked. Additionally, Andrews was ranked in the top 5 percent of all universities on overall and ethnic diversity and in the top 15 percent for “Best for the Money” and “Best for the Money With Aid.”
- Niche, another newer set of rankings, combines U.S. Department of Education statistics with student surveys to rank universities and colleges. Among the national rankings included, Andrews was ranked #4 (out of 1,583) for Most Diverse Colleges and in the top 25 percent for Best Christian Colleges, Best Small Colleges, Top Private Universities and overall Best Colleges in America (#381 out of 1,626).
- In Michigan state listings, which included rankings in one or several categories for the more than 50 colleges and universities ranked in these listings, Andrews received a #1 ranking for Most Diverse Colleges, #2 ranking for Best Small Colleges and Best Cafeteria Food, #3 among Best Christian Colleges and #4 for Top Private Universities in Michigan. Out of 44 universities and colleges who received Best Colleges rankings in Niche’s Michigan reporting, Andrews was #8.