NRC Sociology Rankings

Andrew J. Perrin

November 3, 2010
Methods

- Ranking of research-oriented doctoral programs in all disciplines
- http://www.nap.edu/rdp/
- Data from 2005–06
- Two rankings:
  - S(urvey): Faculty surveyed report standards they consider important to the field, data are weighted according to those standards
  - R(egression): Faculty surveyed report reputations of programs they consider high performers, standards are deduced from these rankings, data are weighted according to these deduced standards
Results for UNC

95% Confidence Intervals

\[ S: \ 8–16 \]
\[ R: \ 8–13 \]
Results in Context
Courtesy Philip Cohen

Sociology doctoral programs
Ranked by regression-based weights (blue) and survey-based weights (red), 5th to 95th percentiles and average (black). Top 25 programs shown from lowest to highest average rank.
5th Percentile Scores

1 PRINCETON UNIVERSITY
3 HARVARD UNIVERSITY
3 UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
3 PENN STATE UNIVERSITY
4 DUKE UNIVERSITY
5 UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
6 UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN—ANN ARBOR
6 UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA—SAN FRANCISCO
6 UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA—LINCOLN
7 UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
8 COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK
8 UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL
10 STANFORD UNIVERSITY

30 UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY
49 UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES
5th Percentile R Scores
1 COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK
1 HARVARD UNIVERSITY
2 PRINCETON UNIVERSITY
3 UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA–BERKELEY
4 UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
5 UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
5 UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN–ANN ARBOR
6 STANFORD UNIVERSITY
6 UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON
8 UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
8 UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA–LOS ANGELES
8 UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL
9 TEMPLE UNIVERSITY
10 UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
Easiest Way to Read Results

http://chronicle.com/page/NRC-Rankings/321/
Data and Methods Concerns

- Books are not counted at all (but are 5 articles in the humanities)
- Quantitative GRE is measure of grad student quality
- Student external funding only considered for first years and for a single year
- Faculty apportioned to departments based on service on dissertation committees
UNC Data Anomalies

- Research productivity:
  - NRC figure: 0.63 articles per faculty per year
  - Our count, their method: 1.794
  - Their count, top program (UCSF): 1.14
  - Including books as one article: 1.86
  - Including books as five articles: 2.14

- Faculty allocations:
  - **Griffin**: 50% (50% history)
  - **Mouw**: 90% (5% Nutrition, 5% Public Policy)
What to Do?

Proposal 1: UNC Sociology prides itself on careful methods for accurate assessment. The NRC’s decisions about how to measure productivity and quality create an unwarranted bias toward one part of our discipline and against others. Furthermore, we have concerns about the quality of the data collected. We therefore cannot endorse the methods or data behind the sociology rankings, and we encourage potential students and administrations to avoid making decisions based on these rankings.

And/or...

Proposal 2: UNC Sociology suggests that the ASA President appoint an ad hoc task force on the NRC rankings to make a proposal to the council for their February meeting so the discipline as a whole can respond to these concerns.