

Which colleges collect student data?

At least 44 universities across the United States track prospective students using bits of code, called cookies, or use predictive data models to score students, or do both, according to interviews, school contracts and an analysis of website-tracking software.

School	Type	Location	2017 total Enrollment	Uses Web cookies to track students ¹	Uses predictive models to score students ²	School comment
Alderson Broaddus University	Private	Philippi, W.V.	1,020	✓		Did not respond.
Biola University	Private	La Mirada, Calif.	6,172	✓		Did not respond.
Bowling Green State University	Public	Bowling Green, Ohio	17,357		✓	BGSU says it uses scores to prioritize recruits.
Carson-Newman University	Private	Jefferson City, Tenn.	2,514	✓		Did not respond.
Clark University	Private	Worcester, Mass.	3,153	✓		Did not respond.
Colorado State University at Pueblo	Public	Pueblo, Colo.	6,639	✓	✓	CSU-Pueblo says it uses data only to prioritize recruits and give students relevant information.
Cooper Union	Private	New York	946	✓		Declined to comment.
Creighton University	Private	Omaha	8,654		✓	Creighton says it uses predictive scores to find students who are an academic, social and financial fit for the school.
Dominican College	Private	Orangeburg, N.Y.	1,954	✓		Did not respond.
Drew University	Private	Madison, N.J.	2,117	✓		Did not respond.

George Mason University	Public	Fairfax, Va.	35,984	✓	✓	GMU says scores help it determine which prospects to target with brochures and how much financial aid to offer applicants.
Illinois Wesleyan University	Private	Bloomington, Ill.	1,649	✓		Did not respond.
Indiana University PUC	Public	Columbus, Ind.	1,521	✓		IUPUC says it shows different marketing messages to visitors based on what they click.
Indiana University PUI	Public	Indianapolis	29,791		✓	IUPUI says it sends different communications to different students based on scores.
Marquette University	Private	Milwaukee	11,426		✓	Marquette says it uses only scores to identify potential applicants; no scores are used at the application stage or later.
Mississippi State University	Public	Mississippi State, Miss.	21,883	✓	✓	MSU says it identifies top recruits based on major of choice, geography, income level and other factors.
Northern Vermont University	Public	Johnson, Vt.	N/A	✓		NVU says it uses cookie data to identify students who are interested in the school.
Portland State University	Public	Portland, Ore.	26,693	✓	✓	PSU says it does not collect personal information unless visitors voluntarily provide it to the school.
Potomac State College of WVU	Public	Keyser, W.V.	1,410	✓		WVU Potomac State College says it does not collect cookie data that personally identifies visitors.

Saint Anselm College	Private	Manchester, N.H.	1,964	✓		Did not respond.
San Jose State University	Public	San Jose, Calif.	35,835	✓		SJSU says it uses Web cookies only for graduate student marketing.
Stetson University	Private	DeLand, Fla.	4,252	✓		Declined to comment.
Stevenson University	Private	Stevenson, Md.	3,876	✓		Did not respond.
SUNY Buffalo State	Public	Buffalo, N.Y.	9,516	✓		SUNY Buffalo State says it customizes its messages to prospective students based on their Web activity.
SUNY ESF	Public	Syracuse, N.Y.	2,213	✓		SUNY ESF says it uses cookies only to show "short-term, single session pop-up" ads and deletes them within hours.
SUNY Maritime College	Public	Throggs Neck, N.Y.	1,794	✓		Did not respond.
Sweet Briar University	Private	Sweet Briar, Va.	323	✓		Did not respond.
Texas Christian University	Private	Fort Worth, Tex.	10,489		✓	TCU says it complies with applicable laws and follows industry best practices to identify prospective students.
Tusculum University	Private	Greeneville, Tenn.	1,767	✓		Did not respond.
University of Kentucky	Public	Lexington, Ky.	29,465		✓	UK says it makes student predictions based on academics, financial need and demographics.

UNC Pembroke	Public	Pembroke, N.C.	6,252	✓	✓	UNC Pembroke says it uses predictive scores to estimate enrollment and plan new school programs.
University of Denver	Private	Denver	11,434		✓	DU says it uses predictive scores only to narrow down the number of recruiting calls it makes.
University of Kansas	Public	Lawrence, Kan.	27,625	✓		KU says it doesn't "discuss the specifics of analytics used in the recruitment process."
University of Memphis	Public	Memphis	21,521	✓		UM says it is not necessary to reveal personal information to visit its website.
University of Pittsburgh	Public	Pittsburgh	28,642	✓		Did not respond.
University of San Diego	Private	San Diego	8,905		✓	USD says it uses predictive analytics to estimate class enrollment and administer financial aid.
University of San Francisco	Private	San Francisco	11,063		✓	USF says it uses analytics to plan financial aid and help recruiters find diverse students.
University of South Carolina	Public	Columbia, S.C.	34,731	✓		Did not respond.
University of Toledo	Public	Toledo	20,579	✓	✓	UToledo says it uses predictive modeling for financial aid planning and to connect with prospective students.

University of Wisconsin-Stout	Public	Menomonie, Wis.	9,416		✓	UW-Stout says predictive scores help it lower recruiting costs. Demographic information is not used in scores, it says.
Vanderbilt University	Private	Nashville	12,592		✓	VU says it uses data analysis to identify prospective students who are hard to find in other ways.
Virginia Tech	Public	Blacksburg, Va.	34,440		✓	Virginia Tech says it uses models to predict class size, not in the application review process.
Western Kentucky University	Public	Bowling Green, Ky.	20,257	✓	✓	WKU says is uses predictive modeling to assist in student search and project class size, not in admission decisions.
Wittenberg University	Private	Springfield, Ohio	1,884	✓		Did not respond.

1. Using a privacy tool, The Washington Post identified tracking cookies from Capture Higher Ed, a company that helps colleges track student behavior on the Web.

2. Contracts and interviews confirmed that admissions, enrollment or financial aid staff score prospective students on their likelihood of applying, enrolling or accepting financial aid offers. Schools said they complied with student privacy laws and do not use scores to make final admissions decisions.