



University Ranking Report

A ranking of national universities based
on coding assessment results

2021



01. Introduction

A prestigious university on a resume often determines whether a **candidate is considered** for an interview.

In a changing talent landscape where two-thirds of engineers are self-taught and your next hire could be based anywhere, recruiters need better, more equitable signals for early talent sourcing. That's why we created the CodeSignal University Ranking Report, which doesn't rely on prestige but is based purely on data about students' coding skills.

More than 50% of all graduating CS students in the US take CodeSignal's General Coding Assessment (GCA). This report presents our ranking of the 30 universities with the highest concentration of students who received a top score on the GCA. We've also included which universities had the most students who got a perfect score on the test.

We hope that this report will help recruiters and hiring managers question the efficacy of using pedigree as proxy for skills in their hiring process.



02.

CodeSignal's Skills-Based University Ranking

Name-brand schools don't have a monopoly on CS talent

Is a prestigious name on a resume really the best indicator of future job success?

50% of U.S. News & World Report's top 30 undergraduate engineering programs didn't make our skills-based ranking.

Only **2 universities** in our top 10 were also in the U.S. News top 10 (MIT and Carnegie Mellon).








UC Berkeley and **Stanford**, tied for **#2** in the U.S. News ranking, don't make our top 10.














Miami University and **California State University, Sacramento** aren't included at all in the U.S. News ranking (which has over 200 schools).



Our Top 30 Universities

02. CodeSignal's Skills-Based University Ranking

Rank	School	GCA Performance*
1	 Massachusetts Institute of Technology	28.71%
2	 • Miami University	28.57%
3	 Carnegie Mellon University	27.79%
4	 • State University of New York at Stony Brook	25.82%
5	 Columbia University	25.70%
6	 • University of Chicago	25.21%
7	 Rice University	25.10%
8	 • University of Oklahoma	25.00%
9	 • Drexel University	23.08%
10	 • California State University, Sacramento	23.08%
11	 Harvard University	23.04%
12	 Stanford University	21.67%
13	 University of California, San Diego	21.33%
14	 • Yale University	21.31%
15	 California Institute of Technology	21.28%

Rank	School	GCA Performance*
16	 University of Southern California	21.10%
17	 • Duke University	20.50%
18	 University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	20.03%
19	 Emory University	20.00%
20	 • Brown University	19.68%
21	 • Texas A&M University - College Station	19.21%
22	 Princeton University	18.89%
23	 UF	18.71%
24	 • University of Massachusetts at Amherst	18.65%
25	 • Johns Hopkins University	18.63%
26	 University of Rochester	17.92%
27	 • Georgetown University	17.86%
28	 • University of Pittsburgh	17.74%
29	 • University of Texas at Austin	17.73%
30	 Northwestern University	17.65%

• Highlighted universities don't appear on the US News & World Report's top 30 [Best Undergraduate Engineering Programs](#).

* Percentage of students who took the GCA that scored over an 800 on the CodeSignal General Coding Assessment



Using coding skills assessment results helps you identify **qualified candidates**



CodeSignal Tip: Target Overlooked Schools

These universities made our top 30, but they're significantly **less likely** to be targeted by recruiters than Stanford, MIT, or UC Berkeley:



Miami
University



SUNY - Stony
Brook



University
of Oklahoma



Drexel
University



California State
University,
Sacramento



03. **Perfect Scores**

The most skilled students aren't all in one place

Only **0.2%** of students earned a perfect score on the GCA. Our data shows that these star-quality developers are located all over the US, and often come from schools that recruiters don't traditionally target.



CodeSignal Tip: Interview Virtually

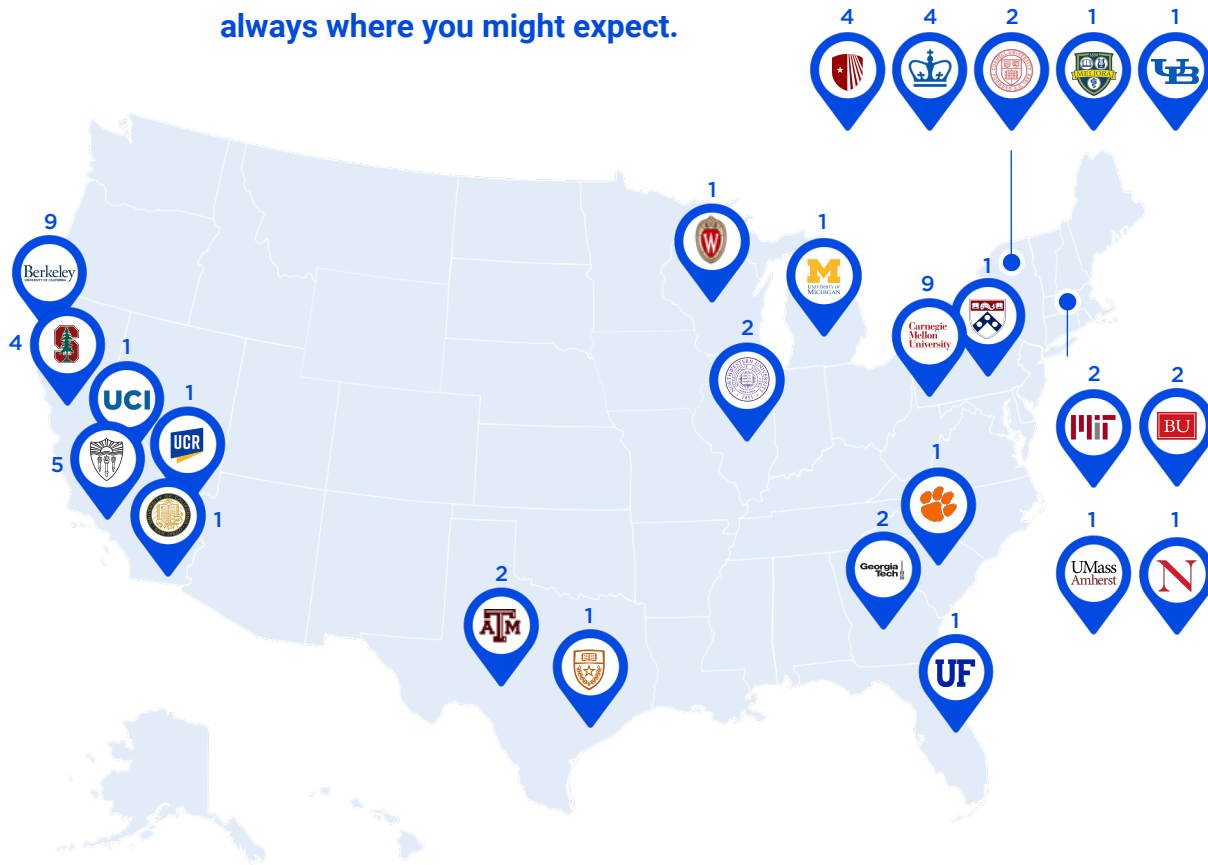
Investing in your remote hiring process will allow you to source from diverse schools. You can create a great candidate experience (and avoid taxing your engineering team) by implementing an automated coding assessment and structured live interviews.





Perfect Scores

Students with **perfect GCA** scores can be found across the US, **not always where you might expect.**



University	Location	# Perfect scores
University of California, Berkeley	Berkeley, CA	9
Carnegie Mellon University	Pittsburgh, PA	9
USC	Los Angeles, CA	5
SUNY Stony Brook	Stony Brook, NY	4
Stanford University	Palo Alto, CA	4
Columbia University	New York, NY	4
Texas A&M	College Station, TX	2
Northwestern University	Evanston, IL	2
MIT	Cambridge, MA	2
Georgia Institute of Technology	Atlanta, GA	2
Cornell University	Ithaca, NY	2
Boston University	Boston, MA	2
University of Wisconsin - Madison	Madison, WI	1
UT Austin	Austin, TX	1
University of Rochester	Rochester, NY	1
University of Pennsylvania	Philadelphia, PA	1
University of Michigan - Ann Arbor	Ann Arbor, MI	1
University of Massachusetts at Amherst	Amherst, MA	1
University of Florida	Gainesville, FL	1
University of California, San Diego	San Diego, CA	1
University of California, Riverside	Riverside, CA	1
UC, Irvine	Irvine, CA	1
SUNY at Buffalo	Buffalo, NY	1
Northeastern University	Boston, MA	1
Clemson University	Clemson, SC	1



04. Conclusion

The data from CodeSignal's standardized programming skills test, the GCA, shows that a degree from one of the traditional top engineering programs **is not necessarily the best signal** for sourcing early talent.

Assessing candidates' skills rather than their resumes is a proven way to build a **stronger, more diverse team.**

In the future we hope to gather more in-depth educational background information to **include skills data of technical talent who don't have** a traditional computer science college degree. We also plan to append demographic info such as gender, race, and socioeconomic background to understand GCA performance data across more dimensions.



05. **Methodology**

We analyzed the results of the General Coding Assessment (GCA), which measures the core programming and computer science fundamentals.

For this analysis, we've inferred the name of educational institutions from the email domains associated with the GCA takers.

To support valid comparisons, we've adopted U.S. News & World Report's grouping of colleges and included schools that met the criteria for the "National University" group.

For our ranking, we considered universities that had more than 10 test takers.





What is the **GCA**?

GCA is a standardized test of the core programming and CS fundamentals taught in most undergraduate programs in the US.

Consists of **4** language-agnostic code writing tasks

Developed by CodeSignal Research

Completed by over **95,000** test takers

Used by over **150** top tier companies as their primary technical assessment for early talent hiring

facebook

Uber

asana

Robinhood

databricks

Quora

ebay

Learn more about CodeSignal's University Recruiting solutions [here](#).



We focused on

GCA scores over **800** (**84th** percentile)

Similar to an SAT, the GCA has many variations of questions but produces comparable test scores. The GCA score ranges between **600-849**.

A score of **800 or higher** signifies an excellent computer science foundation and outstanding ability to implement scalable applications.

What does the GCA score represent?

Score Range	Percentile	Description
600-649	0th-6th	The test taker can write simple code to do some operations.
650-699	6th-25th	The test taker is familiar with programming and can work with some common data structures.
700-749	25th-59th	The test taker has solid implementation skills and can solve some algorithmic tasks.
750-799	59th-84th	The test taker has good problem-solving skills, is familiar with algorithms, and can implement ideas that don't require too much coding.
800-849	84th-100th	The test taker has excellent algorithmic and problem-solving skills and can develop large, complex applications.



06. Additional Information

References

- US News & World Report's [Best Undergraduate Engineering Programs](#)
- US News & World Report's [Methodology](#)
- College Recruiter - [How COVID-19 Permanently Changed the Geography of Recruiting](#)

Resources

- [General Coding Assessment Framework](#)
- [University Recruiting With CodeSignal](#)
- [How 2020 Transformed Technical Recruiting](#)
- [How to Run a Structured Interview With CodeSignal](#)