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Greenest Public University in the U.S.

UCSB ranked No. 3 in Princeton Review's list of the Top 50 Green Colleges — and No. 1 among public universities

(Santa Barbara, Calif.) -- With Earth Day less than a week away, Princeton Review just provided some solid evidence of UC Santa Barbara's unwavering commitment to sustainability.

UCSB has just been ranked No. 3 in the nation in Princeton Review's Top 50 Green Colleges. Further, the two colleges ahead of UCSB in the rankings, Lewis & Clark College of Oregon and Green Mountain College of Vermont, are private, making UCSB the No. 1-ranked public university in the country.

The Green Colleges rankings are part of Princeton Review's 2015 Guide to 353 Green Colleges. The guide profiles colleges with the most exceptional commitments to sustainability based on their academic offerings and career preparation for students, campus policies, initiatives and activities.

"That UCSB is ranked as the number three green university campus in the nation — and the number one public university — is a testament to the endeavors of generations of staff, students and faculty who have collectively worked to bring such a large and complex institution to its position of preeminence in sustainability," said Bruce Tiffney, co-chair of the Chancellor's Sustainability Committee and dean of UCSB's College of Creative Studies. "From Facilities Management through Housing and Residential Services to the complexities of our academic departments and research facilities, all have worked to achieve this goal. While much remains to be done, particularly in light of UC President Janet Napolitano's initiatives in sustainability, the UCSB community can be proud of our achievements and our leadership."

The Princeton Review chose the colleges based on "Green Rating" scores (from 60 to 99) that the company tallied in summer 2014 for 861 colleges using data from its 2013-14 survey of school administrators and students. The survey asked administrators to report on their school's sustainability-related policies, practices and programs. More than 25 data points were weighted in the assessment. Schools with Green Rating scores of 83 or higher made it into this guide.

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Here's what Princeton Review said about UCSB: It's easy to be dazzled by this University of California's "incredible location" in stunning Santa Barbara, but UCSB is much more than a "safe and beautiful campus." "It has one of the top chemical engineering departments in the country," a "highly ranked" mechanical engineering program, and is generally "strong in the sciences." Outstanding students can enroll in the College of Creative Studies, which acts as the university's Honors program and requires a supplemental application: CCS students report that it "allows me to pursue my academic interests with maximum freedom."

In its summary about the UCSB student body, the publication said: To find your place at a big school, get ready to get out and do something: "The typical student is active and involved. Whether it be with sports, or in a community service or environmental club, rock climbing, politics, the list goes on. Students fit in by finding a good group of friends in the dorms and by getting involved in extracurricular activities." Because the university is accessible to so many different types of students, "there is a great sense of community among the students, and those with all sorts of socio-economic backgrounds feel at home here."

And in its description of campus life, the magazine said: No matter the activity; UCSB students love to be involved: "85 percent of our student body is in at least one extracurricular activity — and I've met the smartest people of my life here." Outdoor pastimes like "rock climbing, beach volleyball," "surfing and hiking," "biking, skateboarding," figure prominently in students' favorite ways to spend free time wholesomely.

The rankings can be found at www.princetonreview.com/green-guide. Registration is required to view the rankings.

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Note to editors: An online version of this story can be found at: <http://www.news.ucsb.edu/2015/015325/greenest-public-university-us>

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