

Higher Education Accolades

In many ways the Dallas-Fort Worth region is the intellectual capital of Texas. The Dallas Region's 70-plus accredited universities and colleges provide the intellectual horsepower to drive one of the nation's most diverse economies. To do so, students, faculty, and other academics engage in a wide range of studies from tackling core curricula to exploring the applications of artificial intelligence to improve business operations and societal conditions.

The region has long celebrated the University of North Texas at Denton, the University of Texas at Dallas, and the University of Texas at Arlington as being among Texas' "emerging research" universities in DFW as determined by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. These schools were joined by Southern Methodist University and UT Southwestern Medical Center as top tier research institutions in 2025—a greater concentration than any other Texas region. UT Southwestern is among the nation's best in biology and biochemistry research, resulting in numerous clinical breakthroughs and innovations, as well as serving as home to four Nobel laureates.

72.7%

Regional graduate retention rate for DFW institutions of higher education.
—Perryman Group Higher Education Study (2024)



Home of the first 4-year degree STEM facility in Southern Dallas.



Top in the World:

UT Southwestern Medical Center is the only academic medical center in the world to serve as home to four Nobel laureates.



#1 in Texas:

DFW has **5 Carnegie R-1 Universities** (very high research activity), more than any other Texas metro.



Building a Talent Strong Texas

Texas' strategic plan to align higher education and workforce by striving for 60% of 25- to 64-year-olds to hold a degree or certificate by 2030.



#1 Computer Science Undergraduate Degrees Awarded in the U.S.
—ASEE By the Numbers

#1 Region in Texas for higher ed enrollment and degree completion:

24 percent of all students in Texas are enrolled in a DFW college or university. 26 percent of all degrees completed annually in Texas come from a DFW college or university. That's more than any other region in the state.
—THECB, Lightcast (2025)

"The area still attracts business and financial services companies, which have reached a critical mass and can draw on a network of necessary support services. **Overall growth is buoyed by a well-educated population**, a competitive cost structure and the U.S. economy's strength."
— Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas study, "At the Heart of Texas"



— Dr. Victor Fishman, Executive Director of the Texas Research Alliance

"The theoretical nature of higher education often creates **natural partnerships** with cutting-edge industries. The inverse is true as well. The translation into curriculum of research at the frontiers of science, technology, engineering, math, and management makes higher education institutions **ideal partners for problem-solving across all industries.**"

"We took a problem that we didn't think was solvable. We figured we might have some fun with this and make these students really frustrated. But ... **they came back with an answer.**"

— Worlds' CEO Dave Capps, speaking about the University of Texas at Dallas' Design Capstone program



#5 in the Nation: Best Master's in Data Science Programs

— Fortune Magazine (2025)

#3 Best-Run College in the U.S.

— The Princeton Review (2026)



Named a Best College for Future Leaders

— TIME Magazine (2026)

"The culture of **genuine partnership**, collaboration, and **openness to new ideas** sets DFW apart in the nation."

— Dallas Regional Chamber Higher Education Review

\$13.1 billion: Economic output associated with DFW institutions of higher education. Spinoff benefits of research activity add an additional **\$5.8 billion in GDP.** — Perryman Group Higher Education Study (2024)



No. 7 Best Public School in Texas

— Wall Street Journal/College Pulse (2026)



#1 Most Innovative University in Dallas-Fort Worth

— U.S. News & World Report (2025)