



2020 U.S. University Report Card

Advocacy Guide





2020 U.S. University Report Card **Advocacy Guide for Students**



UAEM's U.S. University Report Card project has returned this year! The Report Card grades the top 60 research universities in the United States on their commitment to open access policies, innovation in biomedical health research for drugs for neglected diseases and essential medicines, student empowerment through global health education, and transparency of research endeavors.

This guide is designed to provide you with information on how to effectively use the Report Card as an advocacy tool at your school. **The end of this guide includes a list of articles and resources to help contextualize the importance of the access to medicines movement and why we prioritize health equity and justice.** This year in light of the global COVID-19 pandemic we have also included questions related to intellectual property and data sharing linked to access to COVID-19 research and development.

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Overview of the Report Card

The 2020 U.S. University Report Card has five evaluation sections: *Access*, *Innovation*, *Empowerment*, *Transparency*, and *COVID-19*. The general description of each section is given below:



1. **Access:** This section measures how seriously your university prioritizes access to medicines through its intellectual property (IP) policies, practices, and open access publishing.



2. **Innovation:** This section analyzes the sources from which your university receives research funding and how it integrates research for neglected diseases (ND) and other global health-oriented causes into its projects.



3. **Empowerment:** This section researches how developed the global health education program is at your university, as well as how accessible opportunities are for obtaining student research funding in global health.



4. **Transparency:** This new section (not present in previous iterations of the Report Card) analyzes your university's commitment to transparency in conducting clinical trials.

In light of the global pandemic, a fifth **COVID-19 section** has also been added to this iteration of the Report Card:



5. **COVID-19:** This recently added section looks at your university's commitment to sharing COVID-19 related IP, through the endorsements of pledges or institutional actions focused on making COVID-19 IP more accessible and available.

Why advocate for university-level change?

Nearly [two billion people](#) worldwide still do not have access to essential medicines. One in three people in the U.S. *prior* to COVID-19 could not afford their medicine. A country's legal framework as well as university technology transfer policies can promote or hinder access to healthcare related intellectual property. The following **hyperlinked** resources provide analyses that highlight the importance and relevance of advocating for accessible and affordable medicines.

Access our complete whitepaper for the 2020 U.S. University Report Card on www.globalhealthgrades.org for a more comprehensive analysis on a university's role in promoting access to medicines.

Resources:

- [Access to medicines through health systems in low- and middle-income countries](#)
- [Nine in 10 Concerned About Rising Drug Costs Due to COVID-19](#)
- [University Grades Are Mixed on Research for the Poor](#)
- [Patients Before Profits: Taking on Big Pharma](#)
- [Improving Access to Medicines in Poor Countries: The Role of Universities](#)
- [BBC: Coronavirus and Race to Develop a Vaccine \(video\)](#)
- [UCLA Students Protest University Patent Claim on Prostate Cancer Treatment](#)

Creating a Baseline for Action

The Report Card is an advocacy tool created by UAEM for use in holding individual universities accountable and to highlight how they compare with other leading research universities in terms of their actions, and not just their commitment to global health equity. **Below are a few foundational questions that will help you understand how to guide your University Report Card advocacy:**

How does the Report Card play a role in the access to medicines movement?

Focusing on the information throughout this advocacy guide can help when developing pre- and post-launch advocacy plans for a targeted campaign on your university focused on changing policy linked to access to medicines. With a proper launch strategy, we aim to generate valuable **support for equitable drug development and licensing processes** on campus and encourage local advocacy and action in follow-up to the release of the new 2020 U.S. University Report Card grades. We care about policies such as Global Access Licensing (GAL) principles and the Equitable Technology Access Frameworks (ETAFs) as these mechanisms will fundamentally change the way medicines are patented and licensed and ultimately who will have access worldwide. We can make a difference today. The introduction of these types of policies can be an important goal for a campus campaign focused on access to medicines.

Did my school appear in previous Report Cards? What grade(s) did it receive?

Please visit www.globalhealthgrades.org and see the previous iterations of the Report Card from 2013 and 2015 to see how your university performed in the past. The 2020 grades will also be available on the same site once launched.

Things to know: If your university was evaluated in previous Report Cards, what were the details of its grade? Be sure to look at the different scores for each section so you can understand their strengths and weaknesses. Both will help give you a better understanding of what you can be advocating for. If your university was not evaluated in the past, this could indicate that your institution received an increase in research funding in the past few years, as a school's inclusion in the U.S. University Report Card is dependent on them being a top recipient of public research funding (see our [methodology](#) for details).

If your school was not included in the 2020 Report Card, but you want to learn about their

approach to equitable biomedical research, we recommend that you highlight other comparable universities' actions and commitments to your institution in order to pressure them to take action. Also, take a look at the [methodology](#) we used to assess universities in order to better understand how you should evaluate your institution. If you would like additional help in discerning your university's equivalent grade, please reach out to reportcard@uaem.org.

Is the Global Health program at my university well known?

Things to know: Universities often advertise their Global Health programs as examples of how to equip students with the tools to handle contemporary global health issues. Often, universities use these programs to highlight uniqueness to attract students and funding.

How this helps: Based on how universities highlight the Global Health opportunities available to their students, you can leverage this information to either commend the school for its efforts or compare them to those of rival universities which have pledged to do more. By seeing where they stand, our target university may feel encouraged to strengthen their Global Health programs.

How does my university advertise its research and development (R&D) projects?

Things to know: This information should be easily accessed by going to your university's technology transfer office's (TTO) website.¹ Other acronyms for TTOs include Office of Technology Commercialization (OTC) or Technology Development Group (TDG). To find your technology transfer page, search the name of your university followed by "technology transfer." This will allow you to see how your university talks about their startups, particularly in drug discovery fields and other life-saving biotechnologies.

Some questions to consider:

- Does your school have many startups?
- Is your school interested in this route for money-making purposes?
- Does your school display any interested in promoting equitable and global access to medicines discovered in its labs?
- What kind of licenses does your school allow or encourage? Is this information easy to find?

¹ TTOs are broadly defined as offices that assist with the transfer and implementation of technologies discovered at the university. This includes Offices of Licensing and Ventures (OLV). You may find that your university has a different name for their equivalent of its TTO.

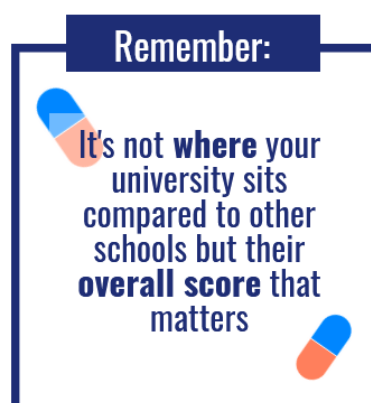
- Do you notice other avenues in which your school promotes their research capabilities? For example: social media accounts, university emails, on-campus promotions, etc. What are their messages?

How this helps: Like the previous question, this gets at the importance your university places on its research programs and their approach to patenting and licensing their health innovations and technologies. Reading over this information, especially press releases linked to newly discovered health innovations, will allow you to determine how to shape your own approach in regards to contacting your university about the latest version of the Report Card. Furthermore, understanding how the university handles patents and licenses for intellectual property (IP) will help you understand its efforts to make its discoveries accessible.

Has my university made any public statements about the importance of clinical trials transparency?

Things to know: In 2019, UAEM released a comprehensive report “Clinical Trials Transparency: U.S. Universities Performance and Trends,” which evaluates how American universities abide by federal laws mandating them to report clinical trials data and ethical principles of disclosure. You can find the report [here](#). You may use this in conjunction with the Report Card findings to support your conclusions and advocacy work. In order to find if universities have made public statements on transparency, search your university’s name followed by “clinical trials transparency.” Many universities have not yet made public statements. One example of a university who has publicly acted on transparency is Yale, which formed the Center for Research Integrity and Transparency ([CRIT](#)).

How this helps: If your university has expressed support for clinical trials transparency, you can compare their vocalized support with their performance in the “transparency” section of the Report Card. If your university has not made any public statements regarding clinical trials transparency, you can use this as a leverage point when initiating communication with the institution.



Taking action leading up to release

Once you are able to establish a baseline for action, you can put a plan in place for pre-launch activities. At this stage we highly recommend direct engagement with university administration. It is important to remember that one of the goals of the Report Card campaign is to create buy-in(s) from your university so that they are encouraged to fully participate in the Report Card process, if not immediately, then over time. Here are some general guidelines to follow:

Choosing an angle: Before taking any action, choose the angle with which you will approach your university. This involves identifying what is most important to your university. **Do not attempt to address all the aspects of the Report Card.** You will be more efficient if you focus on one or two items. Use the questions above to guide your decision-making process. Usually, you will find that talking about the report's findings in the context of reputation or competition will drive your university to respond to you!

Reputation: This angle is best to use when your university values its image as a leader in its community. Encourage your university to commit to more equitable practices by saying that it will help them improve their image. You should research your university administration to determine which approach would be most successful. One example is the congratulatory cake that students at Case Western created for their Technology Transfer Office after the first iteration of the Report Card (pictured below).

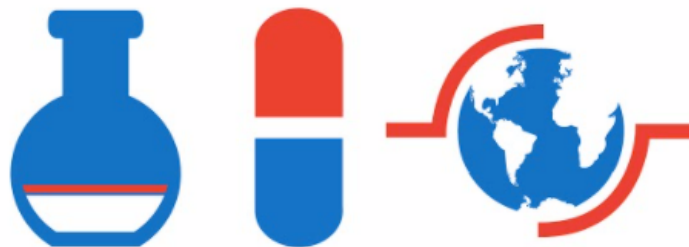


Competition: This angle is best to use when your university values its image as being **superior** to its rival universities. You will want to follow the same steps as the reputation angle, but change the language to fit the new context. List the accomplishments of rival universities who outperformed your institution in the Report Card and show them how they can improve and outcompete other universities.

Selecting your contact point: To obtain buy-in to the Report Card you should identify the office in your university that has the most direct authority in making this happen. Contacts can include, but are not limited to:

- Office of the President
- University Technology Transfer Offices
- Offices of Research and Innovation/Administration
- Global Health Departments/Institutes
- Deans of graduate programs in Public Health, Law, Medicine, Nursing, and other relevant fields
- University hospital administration and faculty members

What if the above process does not work? In the event that your University does not respond to the above, quickly identify faculty and student allies that will join you in applying pressure on your university. Most universities have public-facing websites that list contact information for faculty and student organizations. In addition, you can use social media to gain support on your campus, finding as many allies as possible. There is always strength in numbers!



**OUR LABS. OUR DRUGS.
OUR RESPONSIBILITY.**

Creating a post-launch action plan

After the launch of the Report Card, we encourage you to pursue a more active media presence and/or hold strategic actions once you've determined your goal. We recommend [S.M.A.R.T](#) (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound) goals to push your university. Plan your course of action based on how your university and community responded to the Report Card. Here are 3 potential scenarios based on how your university may respond to the launch:

Cooperation: Your university has cooperated with you in providing the necessary information for the Report Card. If they ranked highly compared to other institutions in certain sections or have worked with you to promote change at the institutional level, you should celebrate this by circulating positive press. If they received a poor grade, build collaboration between UAEM and the university's TTO by helping your school to identify ways to improve and by encouraging them to take steps in the right direction. The specific breakdown of your grade will help steer you in the right direction with next steps (e.g. they don't have global access language in their licenses, they haven't posted their licensing policy, etc.).

Resistance: Your university has actively denied your requests and has directly refused to participate in the Report Card. In this case, their grade will automatically be lower due to lack of response. You should choose actions that draw attention to the university for its behavior and utilize creative advocacy methods to emphasize their poor grade. For example, UAEM students at McGill University in Canada held an event where they [washed the windows of the university's administration building](#) in an effort to encourage their institution to adopt more transparent policies following the release of the Canadian Report Card.

Ambivalence: Your university has passively ignored your requests and has not made an attempt to get in contact with you about Report Card participation. In this case, you can emphasize that you made several attempts at contacting your university through a variety of methods but they did not respond, and you can subsequently challenge the university on social media for their lack of response.

Remember:



All universities were **contacted multiple times** and asked to participate. All schools were also directly called by UAEM students.



If you're not sure how your university responded when they were contacted to participate in the 2020 U.S. University Report Card questionnaire, try starting a conversation with relevant offices by asking them if they have seen the final 2020 grades. Then, base your post-launch action plan on their response.

Depending on the university's response to the project, here are various forms that your advocacy can take. Feel free to go above and beyond with your creativity by collaborating with people of different disciplines and from different universities.

- **Press releases:** Contact your local media outlets including your school newspaper to notify them that your university has been evaluated by our University Report Card, as this will invite them to potentially cover a story on the project and your university's grade. Depending on the grade, this could be a powerful action in either praising a university's improvement or putting pressure on them for their lack of progress.
- **Op-eds:** Write an opinion piece or letter to the editor to either school-affiliated media or local news media. This is your chance to publicly support or decry your university's grade. The UAEM Comms Team (contact information at the bottom of this document) can help guide you through this process. [This Google Drive folder](#) also contains useful information on op-ed writing.
- **Sign-on Letters/Petitions:** Receiving a grade from the University Report Card will immediately highlight a particular area(s) of improvement needed at your university. You can write a brief letter urging your university to accept specific improvements in the needed areas and gather influential faculty signatures and student signatures to convince your university to adopt change. You can also urge them to sign onto the [Open Covid Pledge](#) or the World Health Organization's [Coronavirus Technology Access Pool](#) (C-TAP), an effort spearheaded by the Free the Vaccine (FTV) for COVID-19 campaign. More information about these efforts can be found at the end of this document.
- **Social Media Campaigns:** A successful social media campaign targets a certain

action objective or goal, engages with a broad and diverse group of participants, and is well timed. Use design apps like [Canva](#) to create engaging graphics, send a tweet out to your university demanding them to change, and mobilize your chapter, your university's student body, and other UAEM chapters to join you. We have created a social media bank (including a [Tweet bank](#)) that you can reference, use, and adapt.

- **Public Demonstrations*:** Another way of garnering public attention is by implementing a creative action (e.g. a public demonstration) that draws attention to your university's score/grade and strongly encourages them to work to change it. For example, Case Western students thanked their technology transfer office with a cake, which was also a way to bring students and administration together to talk about where more improvements are needed. On the other hand, if your university scored a relatively lower score you could hold a demonstration in front of your university's medical research centers with information about their grades. Please note that public demonstrations must always have a clear objective and are made more impactful when combined with a press release and a social media strategy to maximize media coverage!

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing guidelines, think about potential creative virtual alternatives you can employ to get the message across! All the above actions can be completed using social distancing and virtual formats. For example, **a banner drop with the grade of the school would be great**, even if it's up for a short period of time. Take a picture of it and post it to social media and encourage your audience to share it and use the hashtags you created for the campaign. Examples of successful advocacy tactics implemented online can be found [here](#).



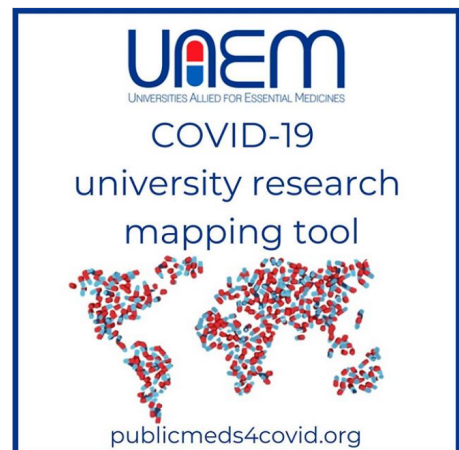
The Report Card Project & COVID-19

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important now more than ever for universities to take action and commit to an equitable and ethical biomedical research framework. The pandemic has exposed many and critical gaps in our health infrastructure and healthcare system. This project in conjunction with other UAEM campaigns, can further highlight the importance of implementing progressive and equitable healthcare policy reform in regards to medicine accessibility and affordability. **Health is a human right!** Universities can and must live up to their missions, values, and responsibilities. Universities have public-focused missions and highlighting how they fall short is important. We are here to help them!

The following tools can help you incorporate COVID-19 into your Report Card advocacy work:

1. **PublicMeds4COVID**

UAEM in collaboration with AMSA (American Medical Student Association) and SNMA (Student National Medical Association), released [PublicMeds4Covid](#), a tool that **tracks and maps public investment in COVID-19 research** on vaccines, diagnostics, and therapeutics. The tool can be used in conjunction with the U.S. Report Card findings to take action and promote access to medicines.



2. **Free the Vaccine**

UAEM and [C4AA](#) (Center for Artistic Activism)'s [Free the Vaccine \(FTV\) Campaign](#) has released a number of resources in promotion of global access to COVID-19 vaccines. Check out their [news](#) page for recent videos, podcasts and articles. FTV has also published a helpful [guide](#) that compares the different IP (intellectual property) policies currently adopted by institutions around the world.

Understanding the various COVID-19 intellectual property policy agreements

As mentioned above, FTV's [guide](#) compares the different COVID-19 intellectual property (IP) policy agreements and frameworks that various institutions have adopted. These policies aim to promote expedited access to COVID-19 discoveries. A snapshot of this information is included below.



a. The Open COVID Pledge (OCP)

Signatories of [OCP](#) commit to making their COVID-19 related IP available free of charge. **UAEM chapters are encouraged to urge their universities to adopt the [Open Covid Pledge](#).** If your university has made previous commitments to global health but has not signed OCP, leverage these findings by pointing out their current hypocrisy using social media campaigns and petitions.



b. The Coronavirus Technology Access Pool (C-TAP)

The World Health Organization's (WHO) [C-TAP](#) compiles the pledges of commitment made by various institutions to the WHO's [Solidarity Call to Action](#) to voluntarily share COVID-19 health technologies, knowledge, IP, and data. C-TAP draws on data from mechanisms like the United Nation's [Medicines Patent Pool](#) the [Technology Access Partnership](#).

c. **The Stanford/Harvard/MIT COVID-19 Technology Access Framework**

[This cross-institutional agreement](#) commits signatory universities to work towards facilitating global access to COVID-19 technologies. It includes non-exclusive and royalty-free IP rights for some COVID-19 technologies in return for licensees' commitment to widely distribute the products at a low cost. This agreement is time limited to during the pandemic and for a short period afterwards, and does not provide a draft licensing agreement.



d. **The AUTM COVID-19 Licensing Guidelines**

[AUTM](#) is a non-profit technology transfer organization that has drafted a set of [COVID-19 Licensing Guidelines](#) and encouraged member institutions to endorse them. This agreement promotes the adoption of non-exclusive royalty-free licensing for COVID-19 technologies, however these licenses are time-limited and may convert to commercial licenses after a while. AUTM is not historically seen by UAEM as a solid actor. It is a member of the Bayh-Dole 40 coalition which is [lobbying the US government to avoid using the Bayh-Dole Act](#), which permits the government to use “march-in rights” in public health scenarios to enforce compulsory licensing to lower prices of essential health technologies. Additionally, AUTM’s former president recently wrote [this article](#) calling out UAEM and Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), in response to [this piece](#) written by UAEM fellow Varoon Mathur. The time limitations, subsequent commercial licensing provisions and weak language of AUTM guidelines, coupled with AUTM’s historically stance on the necessity of equitable and affordable access to medicines, make this pledge the weakest of the available options.



Expanding the Scope of Action

This version of the University Report Card project evaluates 60 universities in the United States. In the future, we hope to continue adding universities to assess in our Report Card, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

Your advocacy does not have to be limited to your own university, UAEM encourages you to contact students located at other universities to coordinate joint creative advocacy efforts. Find other UAEMers, talk to your friends, or even recruit like-minded organizations at other schools! Below is a list of the universities evaluated in the 2020 Report Card:

Universities being evaluated by the Report Card:

Note: Universities with UAEM contacts are listed in **bold**.

Baylor College of Medicine - [@bcmhouston](#)
Boston University - [@BU_Tweets](#)
Case Western Reserve University - [@cwru](#)
Columbia University in the City of New York - [@Columbia](#)
Cornell University - [@Cornell](#)
Dartmouth College - [@dartmouth](#)
Duke University - [@DukeU](#)
Emory University - [@EmoryUniversity](#)
Georgetown University - [@Georgetown](#)
Harvard University - [@Harvard](#)
Icahn School of Medicine at Mt. Sinai - [@IcahnMountSinai](#)
Indiana University, Purdue University, Indianapolis - [@IndianaUniv](#), [@LifeAtPurdue](#)
Johns Hopkins University - [@JohnsHopkins](#)
Medical College of Wisconsin - [@MedicalCollege](#)
Northwestern University - [@NorthwesternU](#)
New York University - [@nyuniversity](#)
Ohio State University - [@OhioState](#)
Oregon Health and Science University - [@OHSUNews](#)

Pennsylvania State University - [@penn_state](#)
Stanford University - [@Stanford](#)
SUNY, University at Buffalo - [@SUNY](#), [@UBuffalo](#)
UC Davis - [@ucdavis](#)
UC Irvine - [@UCIrvine](#)
UC San Diego - [@UCSanDiego](#)
UC San Francisco - [@UCSF](#)
UC Los Angeles - [@UCLA](#)
Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences - [@USUhealthsci](#)
University of Alabama, Birmingham - [UABNews](#)
University of Arizona - [@uarizona](#)
University of Chicago - [@UChicago](#)
University of Cincinnati - [@uofcincy](#)
University of Colorado, Denver and Anschutz - [@CUDenver](#), [@CUAnschutz](#)
University of Florida - [@UF](#)
University of Illinois, Chicago - [@thisisUIC](#)
University of Iowa - [@uiowa](#)
University of Kentucky - [@universityofky](#)
University of Maryland, Baltimore - [@UMBaltimore](#)
University of Massachusetts, Medical

School - [@UMassMedical](#)
University of Miami - [@univmiami](#)
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor -
[@UMich](#)
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities -
[@UMNews](#)
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill -
[@UNC](#)
University of Pennsylvania - [@Penn](#)
University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh -
[@PittTweet](#)
University of Rochester - [@UofR](#)
University of South Florida, Tampa -
[@USouthFlorida](#)
University of Southern California - [@USC](#)
University of Texas, Health Science
Center, San Antonio - [@UTHealthSA](#)

University of Texas, M.D. Anderson Cancer
Center - [@MDAndersonNews](#)
University of Texas, Southwestern Medical
Center - [@UTSWNews](#)
University of Utah - [@UUtah](#)
University of Virginia, Charlottesville -
[@UVA](#)
University of Washington, Seattle - [@UW](#)
University of Wisconsin, Madison -
[@UWMadison](#)
Vanderbilt University - [@VanderbiltU](#)
Wake Forest University - [@WakeForest](#)
Washington University, St. Louis -
[@WUSTL](#)
Wayne State University - [@waynestate](#)
Yale University - [@Yale](#)
Yeshiva University - [@YUNews](#)

Acknowledgements

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