

# Dissernet Ranks Russian Universities According to Plagiarism

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Russia's prominent Dissernet online group dedicated to exposing intellectual fraud has published a ranking of the nation's universities based on the frequency of their involvement in alleged academic plagiarism — with the government-sponsored Financial University topping the list.

The Moscow-based school, officially known as Financial University Under the Government of the Russian Federation, was reportedly guilty of playing a role in at least 152 plagiarized doctoral theses, either defended or supervised and reviewed by its students and scholars, according to Dissernet.

It was followed by St. Petersburg State University of Economics, with 122 reported cases of plagiarism, and the Moscow-based Plekhanov Economic University, with 110 cases, according to the Dissernet tally.

The Moscow State Pedagogical University came in seventh, with 81 cases, while one of

Russia's best-known and most-competitive schools, the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO) that educates future diplomats, also made the top 10, with 70 cases of alleged plagiarism.

Moscow State University (MGU) — a school that frequently scores highly in Western rankings of Russia's best universities — received separate plagiarism scores for its various departments in the Dissernet ranking.

The MGU department that fared the worst in the ranking was the school of State Management, which Dissernet has exposed for involvement in 38 cases of alleged plagiarism. MGU's law school followed a distant second, with 24 alleged cases.

Dissernet, a group that includes a number of prominent Russian scholars, writers and activists, has irked a number of officials by exposing their theses as having been lifted without attribution from other works.

An analysis that Dissernet published early this year of dissertations by State Duma deputies showed “improper borrowings” in the works of 49 lawmakers — including 34 from the ruling United Russia Party, eight from the Communist Party, five from the Liberal Democratic Party, and two from A Just Russia faction, the independent Meduza news portal reported.

In its report, Dissernet accused 24 other lawmakers of holding “phantom” dissertations: While the lawmakers' biographies on the State Duma website claim they hold advanced academic degrees, the titles of their supposed theses remain unknown and Dissernet was unable to find those works, Meduza reported.

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