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Ouachita Baptist sets retention record, enrollment increases

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For Immediate Release

Ouachita Baptist sets retention record, enrollment increases

September 13, 2018

For more information, contact Dr. Keldon Henley, chief of staff, at henleyk@obu.edu or 870-245-5405



Arkadelphia, Ark. – Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia begins the fall semester with a record freshman-to-sophomore retention rate of 83.4 percent and student enrollment of 1,660, an increase of 7.45 percent from a year ago.

The enrollment figures account for students in the undergraduate residential, online, and concurrent programs.

“We are pleased that students are choosing to further their education at Ouachita and remain here,” said Dr. Ben Sells, president of Ouachita Baptist University. “Higher retention represents higher student satisfaction and leads to higher graduation and placement rates.”

Recent data from the Arkansas Department of Higher Education shows a 75 percent average retention rate for private universities and a 72 percent average for public universities, positioning Ouachita well over the state and national averages.

The undergraduate residential program includes a significant increase in out-of-state students of 18 percent.

“Our success in attracting out-of-state students is a compliment to Ouachita and demonstrates the growing reputation of our university,” Sells said.

There are 472 new students, including freshmen and transfers. Of new freshmen, 43 percent had high school grade point averages of 3.9 or higher.

“We are very fortunate to have exceptionally well-qualified students, representing our commitment to academic and Christian excellence,” stated Sells.



This year, Ouachita launched a new and innovative nursing program in partnership with Baptist Health that enrolled an inaugural class of 23 students. The university also achieved a record level in private giving and completed three important building projects.

“Ouachita is rising,” Dr. Sells said. “We are empowered by the commitment of students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends who believe in the vision of dreaming a larger dream to advance our Christian higher education mission.”

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About Ouachita Baptist University: Ouachita Baptist University, a private liberal arts university in Arkadelphia, Ark., is in its 132nd year as a Christ-centered learning community. It is consistently ranked among the “Best National Liberal Arts Colleges” by *U.S. News & World Report*. The university has an average student/faculty ratio of 13:1. Its seven academic schools include business, Christian studies, education, fine arts, humanities, natural sciences and social sciences. Additionally, Ouachita offers more than 20 study abroad opportunities with partner institutions around the world. For more information visit www.obu.edu.

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