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### **Ouachita reports highest total spring enrollment in 25 years**

Rachel Gaddis

Ouachita News Bureau

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OUACHITA  
BAPTIST UNIVERSITY



NEWS

For immediate release

**Ouachita reports highest total spring enrollment in 25 years**



*By Rachel Gaddis*

February 9, 2021

For more information, contact OBU's news bureau at [newsbureau@obu.edu](mailto:newsbureau@obu.edu) or (870) 245-5206

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. – Ouachita Baptist University has reported a total spring 2021 enrollment of 1,619, a 3% increase since spring 2020 and the highest spring headcount for the university in 25 years. The increase reflects strong retention of traditional undergraduate students and new programs for non-traditional students.

The increase follows Ouachita's fourth consecutive year of fall enrollment growth – with fall 2020 enrollment being the largest in 20 years – and also reflects a strong 94.1% fall-to-spring retention for the residential freshman class, the third highest on record for the university since 2000-2001. The freshman cohort is one of the most distinctive in Ouachita's history based on average ACT score and high school grade point average as well as the percentage of first-generation college students.

“Ouachita is not only proud of our stellar freshman class and resilient student body as a whole but also the incredible efforts across campus in order for students to continue a fully in-person residential learning experience during the pandemic,” said Dr. Ben Sells, Ouachita president. “We’ve worked hard in recent years to increase offerings for non-traditional students, making a Ouachita education accessible for even more people.”

The 1,619 total enrollment includes 1,415 residential students learning in person on Ouachita's Arkadelphia campus, 161 online and concurrent students and 38 graduate students.

"Along with Ouachita's continued ranking as the '#2 Regional College in the South' by *U.S. News & World Report* and the highest four-year graduate rate on record for the Class of 2020, the enrollment data affirms that Ouachita is as committed as ever to offer students a Christ-centered learning community where they can thrive academically, spiritually and personally," Sells added.

The more than 200 off-campus and graduate students reflect strategic, non-traditional academic initiatives rising at Ouachita in recent years. Such programs have included growing fully online degree offerings; launching a Bachelor of Science in Nursing program that includes two innovative RN-to-BSN tracks; establishing the first full Master of Science degree in applied behavior analysis in the state; enrolling the first cohort in a post-baccalaureate dietetic internship program for students pursuing careers as registered dietitians; and expanding concurrent enrollment offerings at Christian high schools across the region.

Ouachita Baptist University, a private liberal arts university in Arkadelphia, Ark., is in its 134<sup>th</sup> year as a Christ-centered learning community and is ranked the No. 2 "Regional College in the South" by *U.S. News & World Report*. In fall 2020, Ouachita recorded its highest enrollment in 20 years as well as a 97% career outcomes (placement) rate for its most recent graduates. Learn more about the university's highly personal approach, reflected in a student/faculty ratio of 13:1, at [www.obu.edu](http://www.obu.edu).