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OUACHITA
BAPTIST UNIVERSITY



NEWS

For immediate release

Ouachita ranked “#2 Regional College in the South” and more by “U.S. News & World Report”



By Rachel Gaddis

September 25, 2020

For more information, contact OBU’s news bureau at newsbureau@obu.edu or (870) 245-5206

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. – Ouachita Baptist University has been named “#2 Best Regional College in the South” for the second consecutive year by *U.S. News & World Report*. The university landed high honors in other categories in the region, as well, including #4 rankings for “Most Innovative” and “Best Undergraduate Teaching” and #5 for “Best Value.”

The *U.S. News* rankings come as Ouachita has its highest fall enrollment in 20 years and the highest four-year graduate rate on record for the institution.

“It’s exciting and gratifying to see this affirmation of the innovative educational models Ouachita has developed over the last several years,” said Dr. Stan Poole, Ouachita’s vice president of academic affairs. “From embedding undergraduate research into the curriculum to pioneering online and graduate programs that address critical needs for our state and region, we have expanded the university’s reach by capitalizing on the expertise and creativity of our faculty.”

The “Most Innovative” ranking is defined by *U.S. News* as “schools the public should be watching because of the cutting-edge changes the colleges are making on their campuses.” This ranking was determined by peer nomination. College presidents, provosts and admissions deans may nominate up to

15 schools already listed in the “Best College” rankings who they consider have a particular strength in the area. To be selected, a college also had to receive seven or more nominations.

“I’m especially pleased that Ouachita earned this distinction while simultaneously being recognized for outstanding undergraduate teaching,” Poole added. “Year after year our students affirm the quality of our faculty and the strong tradition of teaching excellence, grounded in personal relationships, that distinguishes their Ouachita educational experience.”

The “Best Undergraduate Teaching” ranking “focuses on schools where faculty and administrators are committed to teaching undergraduate students in a high-quality manner,” said *U.S. News*. It also is chosen by peer nomination.

Additionally, Ouachita’s Hickingbotham School of Business was listed in the *U.S. News* “Best Undergraduate Business Programs” nationwide. The ranking is based solely on the judgments of deans and senior faculty members at peer institutions accredited by Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International (AACSB); Ouachita is one of only nine private, undergraduate-only schools in the world to be accredited by AACSB. A school or program had to receive seven or more top-15 nominations to be listed.

The “#2 Best Regional College in the South” ranking includes both public and private colleges and considers peer assessment and average first year retention rate. In the South region, Ouachita trails only High Point University, a college in North Carolina with an enrollment of 4,590.

“These recognitions come as we begin the fall semester with the highest enrollment the university has seen in 20 years and are further evidence that Ouachita is rising,” said Dr. Ben Sells, Ouachita president. “They speak to distinctive qualities we are proud of – providing an excellent and affordable education, embracing innovation, and supporting our students in the classroom and beyond to meet their educational and career goals.”

The “#5 Best Value College in the South” ranking weighs academic quality and cost after accounting for total expenses and financial aid. Schools were scored based on factors including average discount and percentage of students awarded aid.

Ouachita also was included in *U.S. News*’ “A+ Schools for B Students” list, which recognizes schools with an environment where students of all levels are likely to succeed. Ouachita is one of only three colleges in the South and one of 17 regional colleges nationwide to be listed. The ranking considers, among other things, student GPA and the university’s freshman-to-sophomore retention rate.

Ouachita Baptist University, a private liberal arts university in Arkadelphia, Ark., is in its 135th year as a Christ-centered learning community. Its seven academic schools include business, Christian studies, education, fine arts, humanities, natural sciences and social sciences. For more information, visit www.obu.edu or call 800-DIAL-OBU.