

University of Mississippi

eGrove

---

University of Mississippi News

---

11-2-2021

## Explosive Growth in Freshman Class Boosts UM Enrollment

Lisa Stone

Follow this and additional works at: <https://egrove.olemiss.edu/umnews>

---

### Recommended Citation

Stone, Lisa, "Explosive Growth in Freshman Class Boosts UM Enrollment" (2021). *University of Mississippi News*. 1704.

<https://egrove.olemiss.edu/umnews/1704>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by eGrove. It has been accepted for inclusion in University of Mississippi News by an authorized administrator of eGrove. For more information, please contact [egrove@olemiss.edu](mailto:egrove@olemiss.edu).

## Explosive Growth in Freshman Class Boosts UM Enrollment

University records historically high retention rate

NOVEMBER 2, 2021 BY LISA STONE



A UM student (right) takes prospective students and family members on a campus tour. This fall, the university's freshman class grew by 18% to 3,584, the largest one-year jump in Ole Miss history. Photo by Logan Kirkland/Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services

OXFORD, Miss. – The **University of Mississippi** enrolled 21,856 students across its seven campuses for fall 2021. This includes 3,584 students in the freshman class – an 18% increase over 2020, the largest increase in the number of incoming freshmen from one fall to the next in university history.

The university's retention rate, the percentage of last year's first-time students who continued their studies this fall, reached 88.2% – the university's highest retention rate ever. Retention is an important indicator of how the university invests in serving its students and provides a supportive academic environment.

The university's retention rate is 15 percentage points higher than the most recent national average. According to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, the national retention rate for full-time students for fall 2019 was 73.1%.

The university's fall 2021 overall enrollment figure represents a nearly 1% increase, compared to the fall 2020 enrollment of 21,676. In a year when many universities saw declining enrollment as an impact of the pandemic, this increase reflects the university's ongoing commitment to recruiting, supporting and retaining students to offer the most robust higher education opportunities to the broadest number of students.

"Students are the lifeblood of our university, and I'm very proud of how we are attracting more students who discover why we are the best value in higher education in Mississippi," according to U.S. News & World Report, and one of the very best values in the nation," Chancellor Glenn Boyce said.

"Ole Miss students build their personal legacies through our athletic, academic programs, vibrant campus experience and powerful opportunities outside the classroom that prepare and inspire them to pursue lives of leadership and purpose.

"After nearly two years of change and uncertainty prompted by COVID-19, we're ecstatic about all these indicators of growth. It is a tribute to the tremendous efforts and commitment by our faculty and staff, who have



The university's enrollment at Oxford and the regional campuses reflects a geographically diverse student body. UM also is one of the most diverse institutions in the Southeastern Conference, with 4,511 students, or 24% who are underrepresented minorities. Photo by Kevin Bain/Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services

### Follow us on social



### Campus Briefs

#### Students Learn 'Real Politics' in Washington, D.C., Winter Session

OXFORD, Miss. – Eleven University of Mississippi students spent their winter break learning about the people who work behind the scenes of the American government in Washington, D.C. Lead by Jonathan Klingler, assistant professor of political science, the students of Pol 391: Applied Politics met not with candidates, but with the people who make candidates'

[Read the story ...](#)

#### More Posts from this Category

### Thank You To Our Donors

#### Young Alumna Gives Back to School of Accountancy

OXFORD, Miss. – Stephanie Jennings Teague, of Chicago, sees her commitment of \$100,000 to the Patterson School of Accountancy's new building at the University of Mississippi as a means of saying "thank you." "It is a way to show a small token of my appreciation to Ole Miss, the faculty and staff, and the accounting

[Read the story ...](#)

#### More Posts from this Category

### Ole Miss In the News

#### Reuters: Keep an Eye on the Money Supply

U.S. inflation roller coaster prompts fresh look at long-ignored money supply By Michael S. Derby NEW YORK – The amount of money sloshing around the U.S. economy shrank last year for the first time on record, a development that some economists believe bolsters the case for U.S. inflation pressures continuing to abate. The Federal Reserve's

selflessly navigated the numerous challenges we have weathered while, at the same time, fulfilling our vital mission and upholding our commitment to excellence in how we serve our students.”

The university’s enrollment at Oxford and the regional campuses reflects a geographically diverse student body, with students from 81 counties in Mississippi, 49 states, the District of Columbia and 86 countries around the world. A majority of UM students, 53.6%, are Mississippi residents.

UM is one of the most diverse institutions in the Southeastern Conference, with 4,511 students, or 24%, who are underrepresented minorities. African American enrollment totals 2,382 students, or 12.7% of overall enrollment.

### Class of 2025 Profile

This year’s freshman class – the largest of any Mississippi university – includes 3,584 students. Incoming freshmen posted an average ACT score of 24.97 and average GPA of 3.58. This year’s freshmen include:

- 84 valedictorians
- 45 salutatorians
- 77 student body presidents
- 71 Eagle Scouts
- 14 Girl Scout Gold Award recipients
- 26 National Merit finalists and semifinalists

The **Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College** enrolled 1,637 students this fall. This includes 414 new freshmen, with 60.9% of them – 252 students – being Mississippi residents. The Honors College freshman class posted an average ACT of 30.9 and an average high school GPA of 3.97.



Graduate and professional student enrollment grew 6.2% to 3,315, on the Oxford and regional campuses. UM has launched several new degree programs to prepare students for the competitive job market in emerging fields. Photo by Logan Kirkland/Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services

Its students span the breadth of the university’s fields of study, representing 81 academic majors, with the four largest majors being biological science, international studies, accountancy and public policy leadership.

The **Provost Scholars Program**, established in 2010, attracts and rewards high-achieving students with special programming and other academic opportunities. This fall, the university enrolled 666 new Provost Scholars with an average ACT of 29.5 and an average GPA of 3.89.

The freshman class also includes 12 recipients of the **Stamps Scholarship**, one of the largest and most prestigious merit scholarships in the nation. Funded through the **Stamps Family Charitable Foundation**, the new class brings the total number of Stamps Scholars at UM to 51, making Ole Miss the second-largest Stamps program across the U.S. and the United Kingdom.

Ole Miss is the only Mississippi university and one of only six SEC schools that participates in the Stamps program.

“One of the many strengths of our university is the diversity of our programs that attract students who add to the vitality of our community of scholars,” said Noel Wilkin, provost and executive vice chancellor for academic affairs. “The many outstanding programs and educational opportunities offered across our institution enable students to be well-prepared to have successful careers.”

### Graduate and Professional Education

Another area of growth at UM is graduate and professional education. At the Oxford and regional campuses, graduate and professional student enrollment grew 6.2% to 3,315.

During the past year, the university unveiled several new degree programs.

The **Department of Health, Exercise Science and Recreation Management** offers a Master of Science in Sport Analytics, a one-year, online curriculum with two areas of emphasis: sport performance and sport business. Students are trained for analytical positions working with collegiate and professional sports teams, marketing agencies, media companies and more.

The **School of Pharmacy** recently partnered with the **Master of Business Administration program** to establish a Pharm.D./MBA dual degree. The unique program provides extensive instruction and experiential learning in business and management that will guide graduates to become health care leaders in various pharmaceutical settings.

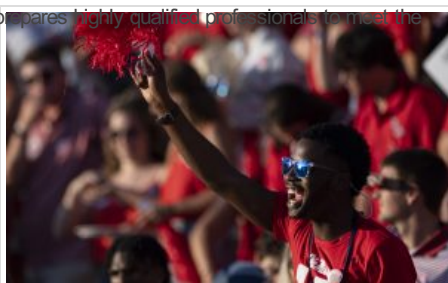
The university’s new master’s degree in athletic training prepares students for careers in the field, and a

[Read the story ...](#)

[More Posts from this Category](#)

new master's degree in applied behavior analysis prepares highly qualified professionals to meet the needs of children with autism and plan treatment and early intervention at a young age.

For the third straight year, the **University of Mississippi Medical Center** has seen an increase in overall enrollment. This year, enrollment increased by 1.6% to 3,056 across its six health science schools.



UMMC has also experienced an upward trend in the number of students admitted yearly, setting a new high mark each year over the past three years. Even in the face of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, where the expectations and strain on health care workers were at unmatched levels, the number of enrollment applications sent to UMMC for the 2021-22 first-year class set an all-time high.

The university has experienced record growth in this year's freshman class, and applications for next year's freshman class are up significantly. Campus officials attribute this growth to the university's academic offerings, campus experience and great value that resonate with students and families. Photo by Logan Kirkland/Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services

"It's so encouraging to see so many future medical professionals and scientists, who have witnessed the recent health care crises and resulting stress on caregivers, stand up and say, 'I want to do that,'" said Dr. LouAnn Woodward, UMMC vice chancellor for health affairs and dean of the **School of Medicine**.

"Mississippi's health care future is in good hands with the students enrolled in our schools. These students want to commit to a life of service, and we will all benefit from their steadfast dedication to that pursuit."

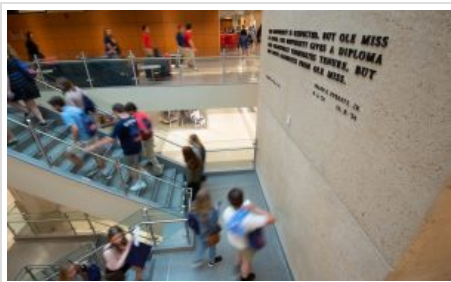
Included in this student growth are those from groups considered underrepresented in medicine. Increased enrollment of this group was seen across all UMMC schools.

### Building for Future Growth

To address the increasingly competitive higher education landscape, the university established the Office of Enrollment Management in 2021 to invigorate universitywide enrollment planning efforts, including recruitment and financial aid awards for prospective and continuing students.

"Our growth in enrollment is a tribute to our entire campus community and alumni, and we are building momentum for continued growth," said Eduardo Prieto, vice chancellor for enrollment management.

"Applications for next year's freshman class are up significantly, showing that our academic offerings, campus experience and great value are resonating with students and families.



Students walk through the Gertrude C. Ford Ole Miss Student Union, which was expanded and renovated to provide updated services for a growing campus community. The university is investing heavily in facilities and programs to build momentum for continued growth. Photo by Kevin Bain/Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services

"With valuable support from our campus partners and alumni, the university's strong national brand and international appeal is attracting many of the best students from Mississippi and across the country."

To address current needs and future growth, the university **broke ground last week on the Jim and Thomas Duff Center for Science and Technology Innovation**, the largest single construction project ever on the Oxford campus.

The new center not only will prepare more students for a job market needing more graduates in STEM-related fields, but its interdisciplinary nature will facilitate

collaboration as students and faculty work across many disciplines under the STEM umbrella.

"At the University of Mississippi, we are committed to enriching the educational opportunities we offer our students," Boyce said. "From the minute a student steps on our campus, we are here to support and empower them through an exceptional education and life-changing experiences, from their first year to graduation.

"We are invested in their success and how they will build successful lives and careers at home in Mississippi and across the world."

FILED UNDER: **FEATURED NEWS, NEWS RELEASES**

