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UM Releases Enrollment for Fall 2020

Graduate and professional enrollment experience increased demand

NOVEMBER 3, 2020 BY LISA STONE

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With enrollment finalized for the fall 2020 semester, the University of Mississippi's first-year retention rate is 85.7 percent, the third-highest retention rate since 2006 for the Oxford campus and an indicator of the university's commitment to supporting its students. Photo by Kevin Bain/Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services

OXFORD, Miss. – The **University of Mississippi** enrolled 21,676 students across its seven campuses for fall 2020. UM's enrollment reflects a geographically diverse student body, with students from all 82 counties in Mississippi, 49 states, the District of Columbia and 86 countries around the world.

The university's fall 2020 enrollment figure represents a 2.7 percent decline when compared to the fall 2019 enrollment figure of 22,273. While the university continues its efforts to increase enrollment, the COVID-19 global pandemic exacerbated a trend of declining enrollment among four-year institutions since the national peak in 2010.

"At the University of Mississippi, we are committed to attracting the best students regardless of the challenging environment across higher education to recruit and retain students," Chancellor Glenn Boyce said. "We remain dedicated to offering renowned academic programs, powerful student experiences and a dynamic campus life to shape purposeful and strategic learners into creative and critical thinkers who will build their personal legacies and be the leaders of tomorrow."

The percentage of last year's first-time students returning to continue their studies this fall, the retention rate, is 85.7 percent. This is the university's third-highest retention rate since 2006.

Retention rate is an indicator of how the university invests in serving its students and provides a supportive academic environment. For reference, the national retention rate in 2018, the most recent national retention rate available, for full-time students, was 73.5 percent, according to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center.

Demographic Snapshot and Freshman Class Profile

A majority of UM students, 59.7 percent, are Mississippi residents. There are 5,276 students, or 24.3 percent, who are underrepresented minorities. African American enrollment totals 2,806 students, or 12.9 percent of overall enrollment.

This year's freshman class includes 3,037 students. The average ACT score of 25.3 and GPA of 3.62 for this freshman class is an increase from fall 2019. This year's freshmen include:

- 118 class valedictorians and salutatorians
- 68 student body presidents

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Campus Briefs

Civil Engineering Professor Receives Most-Cited Paper Award

OXFORD, Miss. – Peer recognition is a rewarding experience for anyone, but University of Mississippi researcher Amir Mehrara Molan was elated when an article he co-authored recently received the Most Cited Paper Award at the 102nd Transportation Research Board meeting in the nation's capital. The International Journal of Transportation Science and Technology presented the civil engineering

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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

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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

- 54 Star Students
- 78 Eagle Scouts
- 5 Girl Scout Gold Award recipients



Students walk to class on the vibrant Ole Miss campus, which continues to attract students from across Mississippi, the country and the world. Photo by Logan Kirkland/Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services

The **Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College** enrolled 1,697 students this fall, up 1.5 percent from 1,672 last fall. This includes 444 new Honors College enrollees, with 57.2 percent of them – 254 students – being Mississippi residents. The Honors College freshman class posted an average ACT of 31.5 and an average high school GPA of 3.98.

The Honors College includes students from 42 states, as well as a number of countries, including Nepal, India, Germany, Vietnam, Mexico, the Philippines and South Korea. Its students span the breadth of the university's

fields of study, representing 79 academic majors.

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 550 new Provost Scholars with an average ACT of 29.8 and an average GPA of 3.85.

The freshman class also includes 19 recipients of the **Stamps Scholarship**, one of the largest and most prestigious merit scholarships in the state and nation. Funded through the **Stamps Family Charitable Foundation**, the new class brings the total number of Stamps Scholars at UM to 49, making Ole Miss the second-largest program in the nation.

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

"We are proud of the outstanding programs that set our university apart from other universities in the state and nation," said Noel Wilkin, provost and executive vice chancellor for academic affairs. "Students choose the University of Mississippi because of the outstanding education that they will receive, the importance we place on student success and the unparalleled opportunities that our programs offer to students."

Graduate and Professional Education

Total UM graduate and professional student enrollment grew by 7.8 percent to 4,821. The university's efforts to work with applicants amid the challenges of the pandemic yielded higher graduate student enrollment and a more diverse graduate student body.

"The university offers a number of excellent and affordable graduate programs," said Annette Kluck, dean of the Graduate School and professor of leadership and counselor education. "With the unexpected economic challenges caused by COVID-19, this value is more important than ever, and we see that reflected in our increased graduate student enrollment."

A number of graduate programs experienced growth, including the M.S. in Integrated Marketing Communications and the online MBA degree, which is recognized as one of the best in the nation by U.S. News & World Report.

With a 76 percent increase in enrollment over last year, the new Master of Criminal Justice is in demand with professionals already working in leadership roles within security, emergency management and policing fields.

The doctoral program that saw the greatest growth this year was the Ph.D. in Second Language Studies, which educates students to function in a multicultural and multilingual society and prepares professionals to be global leaders for a range of environments.

The **School of Law** enjoyed a 16 percent increase to an overall enrollment of 486 students. Students are drawn to the university's law school for, among other things, its nationally ranked offerings in its business law program, a unique program in space law, practical training and federal judicial clerkship placement.

"UM law has yet another incoming class of incredible students," said Susan Duncan, the school's dean. "In these uncertain times, we are honored that they have entrusted us with providing them the best legal education possible as they begin their journey as professionals."



A professor conducts class outside on the Oxford campus to adhere to COVID-19 protocols and procedures. Photo by Logan Kirkland/Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services

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"These 167 students have wisely chosen an institution known for its clinical programs, federal judicial clerkship placement, business law program and value."

As the world continues to deal with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, one thing has been made obvious in 2020: it's vital for communities to have access to a well-trained health care workforce. Academic health science centers are increasingly important in providing ample, ready-to-work health care professionals, especially in the face of the recent strains put on the medical community.

Enrollment at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, Mississippi's only academic medical center, this year is 3,008 across the six schools based at UMMC's Jackson campus, an increase of 156 learners over the previous year.

"I'm proud of the work our schools have done to continue to fulfill their role as the state's largest producer of professionals across the entirety of the health care spectrum," said Dr. LouAnn Woodward, UMMC vice chancellor for health affairs and dean of the School of Medicine.

"Mississippi is always in need of more health care professionals, but the effect COVID-19 has had on our state's health care system has made that need even greater. Increasing enrollment while much of our campus, like most health provider institutions across the country, was nearly completely in shut-down mode is nothing short of remarkable."

For more information on enrollment and programs at UM, visit <http://www.olemiss.edu>.

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