Fall enrollment breaks records

Freshman class boasts 111 valedictorians

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette enrolled a record number of students for the fall semester, including the largest number of freshmen ever, with nearly 3,200 students selecting the university for their first semester of college.

College officials said overall enrollment for the fall is 19,033 students, up from last year's 18,235 students. Enrollment in degree-seeking programs also grew by 2 percent from last fall's 17,195 to this fall's 17,508. The freshman class enrollment is 3,179 students — a 9 percent increase from last fall's 2,922 students.

"All three are record enrollments for the university," DeWayne Bowie, the university's vice president for enrollment management, said in a news release.

Source: University of Louisiana at Lafayette
In addition, Bowie said, there was an increase in the quality of freshman students enrolling this year. A record number of high school valedictorians—111—enrolled this year, Bowie said, and the average ACT composite score of incoming students rose from 23.1 to 23.4. Bowie said there was a 26 percent increase from last year in the number of first-time students with an ACT composite score of at least 25.

He also touted diversity among this semester's students, with a 15 percent increase in Hispanic students, a 5 percent increase in African-American students and a 3 percent boost in the number of female students on the campus.

Enrollment among students seeking advanced degrees has grown over the past five years—by 22 percent for master's degree-seeking students and 18 percent among doctoral students, Bowie said. The university also cited growing interest from students in and out of state in what the university has to offer. Bowie cited the following increases in applications for admission from the following parishes: Baton Rouge, 21 percent; Jefferson Parish, 21 percent; Orleans Parish, 25 percent; and St. Landry Parish, 21 percent.

There was a 5 percent increase in applications from Lafayette Parish students.

Bowie also reported that out-of-state recruitment efforts paid off, with an overall 4 percent increase in out-of-state applications for admission.

“We're seeing significant increases in first-time freshman applications from several states, including Florida, 20 percent; Mississippi, 8 percent; and Illinois, 59 percent,” he said. “At one time, we were called the best-keptsecret. Well, the secret is out, and more and more people like what they see and hear about the university.”