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10-10-2005

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University Relations, "First Washington Monthly college guide ranks UMM" (2005). *Campus News Archive*. 2163.

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First Washington Monthly college guide ranks UMM

Summary:

(October 10, 2005)-The University of Minnesota, Morris recently received another national accolade: UMM has been ranked third nationally among all public liberal arts colleges in the first annual Washington Monthly College Guide.

The Washington Monthly College Guide ranks colleges based on a different set of criteria than other well-known rankings such as U.S. News & World Report's America's Best Colleges. Unlike other college guides that base their rankings on academic excellence or affordable cost The Washington Monthly says, "Other guides ask what colleges can do for you. We ask what colleges are doing for the country."

"It is very gratifying that UMM is selected as a top public liberal arts college in a rating system which stresses social service, citizenship, and the education of productive and useful contributors to society," said UMM Chancellor Sam Schuman. "We know we rank highly among our peers in scholarly quality, and it is good to see that we are equally highly assessed in social contributions."

Schools were measured in three different areas: Community Service, Research and Social Mobility.

The colleges' Community Service score was determined by measuring each school's performance in three different areas: the percentage of their students enrolled in the Army or Navy Reserve Officer Training Corps the percent of their students who are currently serving in the Peace Corps and the percentage of their federal work-study grants devoted to community service projects.

Washington Monthly's Research score was based on two measurements: the total amount of an institution's research spending and the number of Ph.Ds awarded by the university in the sciences and engineering.

The Social Mobility score was determined by a bit more complicated means. The study determined that percentage of a school's students who received Pell Grants is a good measure of a school's commitment to educating lower-income students. The study wanted to discern the graduation rate of those students who receive Pell Grants however, schools are not required to track those figures. Historically, lower-income students are less likely to graduate than students from wealthier means, hence, the importance of the Pell Grant indicator. Because of this the study created a formula that predicts a school's likely graduation rate based on its percentage of students receiving Pell Grants.

Thirty percent of UMM students receive Pell grants. Hence it's predicted graduation rate, says the magazine, is 62 percent.

Overall, The Washington Monthly did not consider one category more important than another. A school's final score reflected excellence overall without rewarding an exceptionally high focus on, for example, research. All components of the study were weighted equally when tabulating the final score for each school.

For a detailed list of all of the rankings and scores, visit
<http://search.epnet.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&an=18158915> or visit
<http://www.morris.umn.edu/alumni/universityRelations/news/>

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