

8-20-2004

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Lawrence University

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### Recommended Citation

Lawrence University, "U.S. News & World Report Cites Lawrence University in Three Categories in Annual “Best College’s Guide” (2004). *Press Releases*. Paper 326.  
<http://lux.lawrence.edu/pressreleases/326>

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# U.S. News & World Report Cites Lawrence University in Three Categories in Annual “Best College’s Guide”

*Posted on: August 20th, 2004 by Rick Peterson*

Lawrence University’s outstanding overall educational experience, its distinctive Freshman Studies program, and its diverse international student body, are all cited by *U.S. News & World Report* in the magazine’s most recent annual college rankings.

In *U.S. News*’ 18th annual “America’s Best Colleges” report released Friday (8/20/04), Lawrence was included among the top quarter of the nation’s 217 leading national liberal arts colleges for the sixth consecutive year, earning a 53rd ranking in the “Best Liberal Arts Colleges” category.

Additionally, *U.S. News* recognized Lawrence in two other categories. For the third year in a row, Lawrence was included among *U.S. News*’ list of “first-year experiences” based on the strength of Freshman Studies, the college’s signature curricular program. The first-year experiences list is one of eight special categories the magazine uses to highlight what it describes as “outstanding examples of academic programs that are believed to lead to student success.”

The eight special categories are not distinguished by institutional size or type, but include those cited most frequently in a survey of college presidents, chief academic officers and deans of students. Institutions are not numerically ranked in the special categories, but listed alphabetically. Lawrence joined Duke, Princeton, and Stanford universities, among others, who were recognized for first-year programs.

Using enrollment figures from the past academic year, the magazine also ranked Lawrence seventh among all liberal arts

colleges in percentage of international students enrolled with 11% of the student body comprised of international students. Lawrence students came from 49 countries, Hong Kong and the Palestinian Authority, in addition to 48 U.S. states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

Williams College of Massachusetts was named the top national liberal arts college for the second consecutive year, while Amherst College, last year's second-ranked institution, and Swarthmore College, which the magazine ranked third a year ago, tied for second in this year's rankings.

In compiling its annual "America's Best Colleges" guide, *U.S. News and World Report* uses data from 15 separate indicators of academic excellence such as selectivity, graduation rates, student retention, faculty resources and alumni satisfaction. Each factor is assigned a "weight" that reflects the magazine editor's judgment as to how much that measure matters. Each school's composite weighted score is then compared to peer institutions to determine final rankings.

For the rankings, *U.S. News* evaluates nearly 1,400 of the nation's public and private four-year schools, dividing them into several distinct categories. In addition to the best liberal arts college category, other rankings are based on universities that grant master and doctorate degrees and colleges that are considered "regional" institutions, such as St. Norbert College or UW-Oshkosh, rather than "national" ones, like Lawrence.