

4 state colleges on best value list

Review honors Clemson, Wofford, USC, Charleston

By Anna Simon

Clemson bureau

asimon@greenvillanews.com

Four South Carolina colleges and universities made this year's Best Values list released Tuesday by The Princeton Review.

The College of Charleston, Clemson University, the University of South Carolina and Wofford College are among 150 schools chosen for the magazine's annual Best Value Colleges list for 2012.

The list is based on institutional data and student opinion surveys collected from fall 2010 through fall 2011 at 650 colleges and universities the company regards as the nation's academically best undergraduate institutions, according to the magazine.

USC is cited for awarding more than 1,000 need-based and merit-based scholarships for entering freshmen each year, for respected academic programs, and for its Honors College that offers undergraduates a small, liberal arts college experience on the Columbia campus.

It shows USC is honoring its commitment to offer an outstanding value and recognizes USC's "success in preparing students academically and in equipping them with knowledge and leadership skills to face challenges and opportunities before them," said Scott Verzyl, associate vice president for enrollment management and executive director of undergraduate admissions.

USC's Gamecock Guarantee, which

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TOP PUBLIC COLLEGES

1. UNC at Chapel Hill
2. University of Virginia (Charlottesville)
3. New College of Florida (Sarasota)
4. State University of N.Y. at Binghamton
5. University of Wisconsin (Madison)

Source: www.princetonreview.com

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promises that undergraduate tuition and the technology fee will be covered for up to four years for students who meet the program's academic, financial and participation criteria, also helps keep the cost of a USC education manageable, Verzyl said.

Clemson is recognized in a section titled "Bang for your Buck" for helping students apply classroom learning to real-life situations and providing opportunities to make invaluable contacts in fields they have chosen to pursue, which helps them successfully compete in the job market.

"It is fitting to see Clemson recognized as one of the best values in higher education," said Chuck Knepfle, Clemson's financial aid director.

"In addition to the generous state scholarships available to South Carolina residents, the

amount of scholarship dollars available to incoming students has increased significantly over time."

Clemson will increase scholarship aid to fall enrollees by well more than \$3 million this year through its current "The Will to Lead" Capital Campaign, through which more than 300 scholarships and fellowships have been established, Knepfle said.

Wofford is pleased to be recognized for the value it provides, said Brand Stille, vice president for enrollment.

"Value, cost and return on investment continue to be important factors in selecting a college. At Wofford we are committed to providing first-rate programs and experiences that prepare our students for lives of success and service," Stille said.

College of Charleston Provost George Hynd said he is "delighted" with the recognition that the school is among the best values in American higher education.

"This recognition confirms what our students, faculty, staff,

parents and trustees know — that we provide an exceptional liberal arts education that prepares tomorrow's leaders in South Carolina and beyond," Hynd said.

30 factors

The Princeton Review considered more than 30 factors in areas of academics, cost of attendance, and financial aid in making the selections.

Academic factors included the quality of students as measured by admissions credentials and how students rated their academic experiences.

Cost-of-attendance factors included tuition, room and board, and required fees, according to the magazine.

Financial aid factors included average gift aid awarded, the percentage of graduating students who took out loans to pay for school, and the average debt of those students, according to the magazine.

Students also were asked how satisfied they were with financial aid packages they received.