Clemson named best college value in South Carolina

THE JOURNAL STAFF

CLEMSON — Clemson University has been named the best university in South Carolina in terms of value and among the top colleges nationally by Money magazine.

Nationally, Clemson ranked the third-best "university you can actually get into," the 12th best public university and the overall 21st best university by Money's annual list of "Best Colleges for Your Money."

The magazine ranks schools based on evaluations of educational quality, affordability and career success. Clemson was the only university in South Carolina among the top 85 in the country and the only public university in the state among the top 300 nationally.

The magazine called Clemson, "a major public research university, and while agricultural science continues to be one of the school's specialties, ag students are outnumbered by those studying engineering or business."

The university was noted for its 82 percent graduation rate, which Money said is 8 percent higher than other universities with similar student populations.

The average time to graduation is 4.3 years, students have an average debt after graduation of $22,289, and the average salary within five years of graduation is $53,100.

Clemson accepts 52 percent of its applicants, and average SAT and ACT scores are 1,245 and 29, respectively.

One Clemson graduate surveyed said, "All of the professors I have had have been friendly and knowledgeable in their field. They are willing to help you succeed, especially if you visit them in office hours. There are a variety of classes offered for each major, as well as a unique list of leisure skills classes to choose from."

Public colleges made up 11 of the top 20 schools this year, according to the magazine.

For this year's list, Money ranked 705 schools on 24 factors, including graduation rates; affordability measures, such as how much students and parents have to borrow; and measures of alumni success, such as how much recent graduates earn.

New this year, Money's methodology included data from the federal government's College Scorecard and took into account the percentage of a school's graduates who consider themselves to be in "meaningful" jobs.