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# Princeton Review:

## University, city named tops in Town-Gown Relations

# Clemson is No. 1

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CLEMSON — Clemson Mayor Larry Abernathy said he immediately thought of the late Walter Cox upon learning that the city and Clemson University had been ranked No. 1 in the country in Town-Gown Relations.

It was Cox, newly named the university's interim president to cap a more than 40-year career, who met with Abernathy and Bill Grishaw, described by the mayor as a "mover and shaker in the city," for lunch at a Clemson restaurant. From there, seeds were sown for what would eventually become the Joint City-University Committee — launching the first of many partnerships between the two entities.

"I think the rest is history," Abernathy said. "It has been largely non-political, separate from the things that divert efforts like that, and it's been beneficial. It's been a partnership in every sense of the word."

Last year, Clemson University ranked second for Best Town-Gown relations in the 2009 edition of "The Best 368 Colleges," published by The Princeton Review. During the past five years, Clemson University has moved from No. 16 in the town-gown category all the way to the top.

The Princeton Review, an education services company, asked 122,000 students at 371 top colleges to rate their schools on dozens of topics and report on their campus experiences. The Top 20 colleges in those categories and more than 50 others are featured in the 2010 edition of "The Best 371 Colleges."

According to the survey, Clemson students said Clemson was the "whole package," thanks to its "great professors, athletics, cultural events and student life" all of which is "packed into the small town that supports the school and students 100 percent." Students said the town is filled with "neat shops and restaurants" and that "there's usually plenty going on, including rodeos, concerts, plays and other shows at the Brooks Center."

As far as the university itself, students surveyed said "the campus is right out of a postcard," and that most students are "very friendly" and "full of school spirit."

Students also said professors take time to get to know students and explore innovative ways of teaching, one reason Clemson University's

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Jessica Nelms/Staff

**Clemson Mayor Larry Abernathy**, holding a Tiger football, is excited about the results of a survey published recently by The Princeton Review, which named Clemson as having the best Town-Gown Relations in the nation. The survey is included in the 2010 edition of the Princeton Review's annual college guide, "The Best 371 Colleges."

# CLEMSON

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"retention and graduation rates rank among the highest in the country among public universities." The class rank and SAT scores of incoming freshmen are among the highest of the nation's public research universities.

Abernathy cited Clemson Area Transit, which emerged from yearly exchange visits to other universities; the Clemson University Fire Department and events such as "Welcome Back Clemson" held for Clemson University students each August as examples of Town-Gown relations.

In January, the city and university will meet with local General Assembly members for a breakfast designed to discuss legislative issues of concern and host a "State of Clemson Address" in February, where Clemson University President Jim Barker provides an overview of the university as does Abernathy for the city.

The most recent addition came last year when the city and university spearheaded what is now called the International Town-Gown Association, a 501c3 not-for-profit organization. The association includes a resource center for cities and universities across the U.S. that is in Clemson.

Abernathy said the No. 1 ranking validates what the city and university have worked to achieve through the years.

"I'm thrilled to see that we continue to set the standard," Abernathy said.

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