

ready to roar



REX BROWN | THE JOURNAL

Before the start of the fall semester today, hundreds of Clemson University freshmen came together Tuesday afternoon at Memorial Stadium to spell out "Tigers" on the playing surface of Frank Howard Field. Clemson's freshman class, with 3,650 members, is the largest in the history of the university.

Clemson opens semester with largest freshman class in school history

THE JOURNAL STAFF

CLEMSON — When Clemson University begins the fall semester this morning, it'll do so with the largest freshman class the school has ever seen.

Going into the 2017-18 academic year, Clemson is set

to have 3,650 freshmen on campus for the first time, along with 1,500 transfer students and 1,450 graduate students who are also beginning their stays at the school.

The number of freshmen on campus comes as little surprise, as the school said

freshman applications increased 12 percent this year — 26,244 students submitted applications — as the school's growing academic success and its athletic success have increased exposure across the nation.

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"Our application numbers continue to increase annually and are a direct indication of the university's growing national reputation as a leader in higher education," said David Kuskowski, the school's director of undergraduate admissions. "Our faculty and staff strive to create and maintain a positive learning environment that enriches the lives of our students, and we're looking forward to seeing all of the great accomplishments of the class of 2021."

The school's honors college saw a 5 percent increase in applications to 1,825 for the fall. Students enrolled

in the program had an average score of 1,470 on the SAT and 32 on the ACT.

Eight students will also be part of the National Scholars Program — the university's most selective academic merit program. Their average SAT score is more than 1,530, and they all graduated in the top 1 percent of their high school classes.

First-year students and transfers hail from all over the United States and countries around the world, including China, Denmark, France, Spain and the United Kingdom.

Clemson's graduate school is also on track for continued growth. Of the school's 1,450 graduate students,

241 are working toward a Ph.D. They are spread among Clemson's three campuses, with 908 students attending classes at the main campus, 306 in Greenville and 22 in Charleston.

Like the undergraduates, graduate students come from across the country and world. There are 400 international students, four Fulbright scholars and 42 veterans joining Clemson's family.

Campus-wide celebrations for faculty, staff and students will continue taking place throughout the week, including today's Welcome Back Festival, scheduled for 6-8 p.m. downtown on College Avenue.