



Back to school

Clemson welcomes students back to campus

BY LAUREN PIERCE
THE JOURNAL

CLEMSON — Students were back in force Wednesday at Clemson University on the first day of the fall semester.

According to the school, Clemson welcomed a record-setting class of 4,705 first-year undergraduate students.

The class of 2026 is part of more than 25,000 Clemson students working toward one of 80-plus majors, 90-plus minors and 130-plus graduate degree programs.

The university said it has a 93.6 percent first-year retention rate, 85.5 percent six-year graduation rate and a 16-to-1



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The Clemson University campus was alive with activity on Wednesday as students returned to class for the fall semester. The school welcomed a record-setting class of 4,705 first-year undergraduate students.



student-to-faculty ratio. The top 10 intended majors for the class of 2026 are general engineering, pre-business, biological sciences, nursing, computer science, animal and veterinary sciences, undeclared, health science, preprofessional health studies and architecture.

Clemson is also welcoming 1,455 transfer students and 2,447 first-year graduate students.

ALUMNI ADVICE

The first year of college can often bring unfamiliar surroundings, new friendships and challenging classes.

To ease the transition, Clemson alumni — both new and old — offered their advice to freshmen.

“YOU GOT IN! Just breathe.

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Remember to take breaks, hang out with your friends and most importantly, sleep!" said Maddi Riester, class of 2022.

There are several opportunities to join school clubs and organizations to gain new experiences and meet people who can help along the way.

"Try, experiment, never shy away from asking for help and most importantly, let people help you! There are so many amazing people out there in Clemson ready to help you," class of 2021 graduate Ishan Sharma said.

While self-care and a social life are important at college, alumni advised prioritizing academics.

"Do not shortchange the time you spend at the library ... too many dis-

tractions in the dorm," said Paul "Randy" Bazemore, class of 1970.

Several alumni also put together a bucket list for first-year students:

- Attend all first-year student social gatherings
- Go to Tiger Prowl
- Try the gluten-free cookies in the dining hall
- Go kayaking at the Snow Family Outdoor Fitness and Wellness Complex
- Try different study spaces — then pick your favorites
- Have a sunset picnic on the dikes or rowing docks
- Make a friend in the dining hall
- Explore the S.C. Botanical Garden
- Order fried pickles at Loose Change
- Learn the words of the alma mater

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