

LMC Honored For Academic Excellence

Written by Whitney Noble

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Lees-McRae College is one of 26 schools to receive an NCAA Division II Presidents' Award for Academic Excellence, and the only representative from

Conference Carolinas, announced College officials Wednesday. The award, which is in its second year of existence, honors athletic programs with four-year Academic Success Rates of 90 percent or higher.

Lees-McRae ranks 12th nationally with a 93 percent Academic Success Rate, which is 21 percentage points higher than the national average of 72 percent and 38 percent better than the federal graduation rate. The Bobcats are the lone representative from Conference Carolinas, and the only school from the Southeast Region.

"This is a great achievement and shows the dedication we have with our student-athletes, and their commitment to being great in and out of the classroom," praised Director of Athletics Craig McPhail. "From our coaching staff, to faculty and academic support staff we are all very proud of this honor and look forward to keeping academics and athletics at a very high level at Lees-McRae."

This award is just the latest in a string of exceptional academic achievements for the Bobcats, who combined for a school-record grade point average of 3.13 as a department during the fall 2012 semester. Thirteen of the Bobcats' 17 intercollegiate athletic programs posted a combined team GPA of 3.0 or higher, including six teams with a GPA over 3.2.

"Our CATS program has been a wonderful addition to the student athlete academic success along with our relationships with faculty and staff, the dedication and balance of our young people, as well as the coaches who have recruited, developed and mentored them," said McPhail.

In addition to Lees-McRae's overall ASR of 93 percent, seven of Lees-McRae's 14 athletic programs (cross country and indoor and outdoor track & field are combined by the NCAA) received perfect scores of 100 percent. Those programs include men's basketball, men's lacrosse, men's volleyball, cycling, women's lacrosse, women's soccer, and women's volleyball. The Academic Success Rate is a measure that reflects the unique qualities of Division II. It measures graduation rates for virtually all Division II student-athletes, including transfers and those not receiving athletically related financial aid. The inclusion of student-athletes who do not receive athletically related financial aid distinguishes the ASR from Division I's Graduation Success Rate.

The Division II Academic Success Rate captures about two-thirds more student-athletes than the federal graduation rate, which does not count incoming transfers, counts outgoing transfers as having not graduated and counts only student-athletes receiving athletically related financial aid. The national four-year ASR average is 72 percent.

No matter what measure is used, Division II student-athletes graduate at a higher rate than the general student body. The federal rate for the 2005 entering class of student-athletes was 54 percent, compared to 48 percent for the general student body.

Lees-McRae College, a four-year, co-educational liberal arts college affiliated with the Presbyterian Church, USA, is located in the scenic Blue Ridge Mountains of northwestern North Carolina. Being a year-round tourist destination, the area provides the best of a vibrant college

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community coupled with natural beauty and a rich history. Please see www.lmc.edu for more information.