

News Release

Again Listed Among the Nation's Best

By *ltollefs* on Monday, January 13, 2014

U.S.News and World Report has ranked the University of Minnesota Crookston among colleges and universities offering the nation's "Best Online Bachelor's Programs" for 2014. The U of M Crookston was, again, ranked in the top quartile at #69 out of the 283 higher education respondents in this year's survey. U.S.News & World Report published rankings of institutions offering online degrees for the first time in 2102, and the U of M Crookston has ranked in the top quartile in each of the three listings.

Rankings were based on factors such as graduation rates, faculty credentials, and academic and career support services offered to students, among others. The Crookston campus ranked especially high in the sub-category Student Services and Technology, coming in at number 25.

The U of M Crookston was one of only two Minnesota colleges ranked in the top 100, the other being Concordia University - St. Paul. The U of M Twin Cities campus came in at #160. Other regional campuses listed in the ranking included the University of North Dakota at #131, Valley City State University at #138, and Bemidji State University at #194. The full listing is available online at www.usnews.com/education/online-education/bachelors/rankings.

"Positive recognition by organizations like U.S.News is always welcome, and this particular ranking helps showcase the fact that our online programs are very high quality programs offering students a world-class education," said Fred Wood, chancellor of the U of M Crookston. "Having graduated our first online student in 2001 means our faculty and staff have extensive experience from working for more than a decade to provide access to our programs in this manner online. Their understanding and expertise certainly help us offer the highest quality student experience."

Wood added, "As the world changes, it's good for our students to know they can choose either a great, more traditional on-campus experience or a great online experience that allows them to maintain their workplace, family, and location ties. This is particularly helpful for non-traditional and older students. It is, after all, part of our modern land grant mission to help create access to higher education in a way that meets our students' needs."

The U of M Crookston currently offers thirteen degree programs entirely online. (These degrees are also offered more traditionally on-campus as well.) They include Accounting (B.S.), Applied Health (B.A.H.), Applied Studies (B.S.), Business (B.S.), Communication (B.S.), Entrepreneurship (B.S.), Finance (B.S.), Health Management (B.S.), Information Technology Management (B.S.), Manufacturing Management (B.M.M.), Marketing (B.S.), Quality Management (B.M.M. Q.M.), and Sport and Recreation Management (B.S.). The online programs are delivered via three academic departments: Business; Liberal Arts and Education; and Math, Science, and Technology. UMC's Center for Adult Learning provides outstanding support to these online-only degree-seeking students, of whom the total number enrolled recently surpassed 800.

This year online bachelor's degree programs were ranked in four different sub-categories: Student Engagement, Faculty Credentials and Training, Student Services and Technology, and Peer Reputation. Ranking indicators for the Student Engagement category included teacher accessibility and response timeframe as well as student collaboration opportunities, among others. Faculty Credentials and Training included the appropriate faculty credentialing as well as the institution having the resources properly train online instructors on how to teach distance learners. Student Services and Technology assessed colleges' level of offering "a strong support structure [that] provides learning assistance, career guidance and financial aid resources commensurate with quality campus-based programs." Finally, a new category for 2014, Peer Reputation, included "industry opinion accounts for intangible factors on program quality not captured by statistics."

Data was collected from accredited for-profit, private, and public schools.

For more information about the University of Minnesota Crookston and its online degrees visit www.umcrookston.edu/online, call 800-862-6466 ext. 8681, or e-mail cronline@umn.edu.

Today the University of Minnesota Crookston delivers 29 bachelor's degree programs, 20 minors, and 36 concentrations on campus--as well as 13 degrees online--in the areas of agriculture and natural resources; business; liberal arts and education; and math, science and technology. With an enrollment of 1,800 undergraduates from more than 20 countries and 40 states, the Crookston campus offers a supportive, close-knit atmosphere that leads to a prestigious University of Minnesota degree. "Small Campus. Big Degree." To learn more, visit www.umcrookston.edu.

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