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Fyi:

FORBES RANKS ACADEMY 7th-BEST IN NATION

U.S. AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo., -- As cadets begin their fall semester today, they do so at the #7 undergraduate institution in the nation, according to Forbes.

Forbes released its second annual America's Best Colleges rankings Wednesday.

The rankings are compiled by Forbes and the Center for College Affordability and Productivity, which evaluated 600 undergrad colleges. The rankings are based on a several weighted factors, which are: student evaluations, alumni listed in Who's Who in America, amount of student debt at graduation, percentage of students and instructors who receive nationally competitive awards (Rhodes Scholarships or Nobel Prizes), and the percentage of students who graduate in four years.

These rankings put service academies in the same tier as Ivy League colleges. The Air Force Academy placed at #16 in 2008, moving up to #7 this year, while the U.S. Naval Academy moved from #36 to #30 over the same period. The U.S. Military Academy was ranked #1 in the nation, after placing sixth in 2008.

According to Forbes, the move illustrates strong performances on the part of all the service academies.

At the U.S. Air Force Academy, the student-faculty ratio is 9:1, average class size is 20, 100 percent of the faculty is full-time and zero classes are taught by teaching assistants.

Forbes also ranked the Air Force Academy as the #4 on its list of America's Best College Buys. This follows the Princeton Review's recent best colleges rankings, which put the Academy as #4 in professor availability.

For more information on the full list of rankings by Forbes, visit:

http://www.forbes.com/2009/08/02/best-colleges-ratings-opinions-ranking-2009_land.html

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