

No Presents, No Cake . . . Again

A Guest Editorial

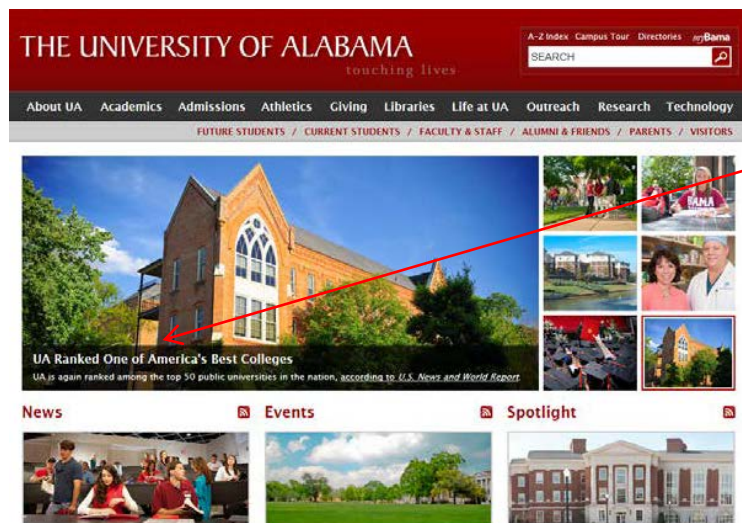
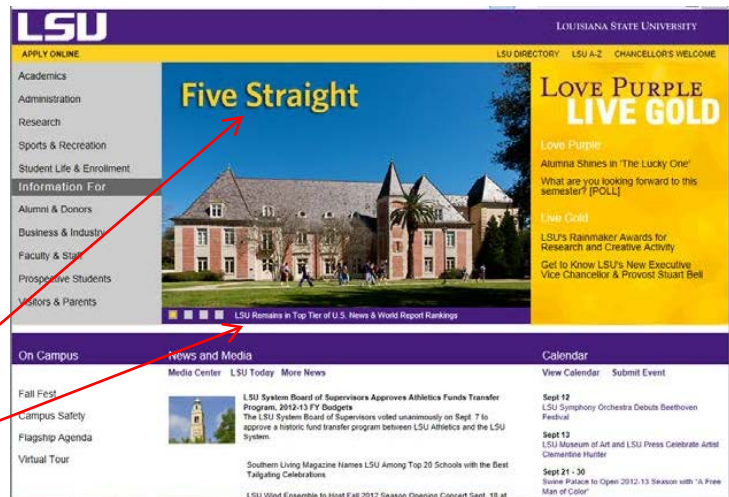
Today is like Christmas day to so many U.S. colleges and universities. Well, maybe that's overstating things a little. Still, it's at least like a birthday, with presents and cake. Those presents and cake come once a year, and in the form of a ranking among sister institutions from *U.S. News & World Report* and its longstanding annual, *Best Colleges*. College and university presidents and provosts eagerly await the annual release, and when they get it, they rush to work and direct the institution's public relations arm to get something – preferably something glowing – up on the website. Local, state and national newspapers are quick to recognize the latest accomplishment, and, along with television news, bloggers, and others, report on the latest accolades handed down from the annual publication.

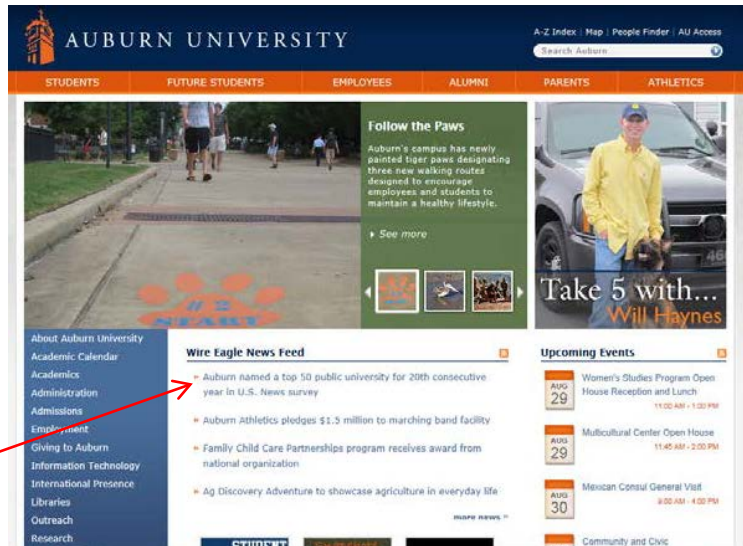
Even though USM has nothing to celebrate in this regard with the 2013 edition of *Best Colleges*, smaller universities around the state do, and have. The screen below, for example, was captured from Millsaps College's homepage. Likewise for Mississippi University for Women and Mississippi College.





USM is also surrounded by other states' schools that are so happy about what presents and cake they got for their birthday this year.





Year after year, USM is left out in the cold when it comes to rankings found in *Best Colleges*. Like a kid who never gets a birthday party – complete with all the presents and cake – USM never gets to put the proverbial *U.S. News* bow up on its website (at least not in a way that's honest).