KINGSVILLE, Texas — The environmental engineering program at Texas A&M University-Kingsville is one of the 50 best in the nation, according to U.S. News and World Report.

Using 2009 data, the magazine ranked A&M-Kingsville’s environmental engineering program, a part of the university’s Frank H. Dotterweich College of Engineering, 45th in the nation, tied with the University of Southern California, Tufts University, Drexel University and five other schools’ programs.

Texas A&M-Kingsville joined the University of Texas at Austin and Rice University as the only three Texas universities listed in the specialty category of Best Environmental/Environmental Health engineering schools. The program moved up from its ranking of 52 from last year.

“Congratulations to the students, faculty and staff of our environmental engineering department for the outstanding work that they do,” said Dr. Steven H. Tallant, president of Texas A&M-Kingsville. “This national ranking is an honor, and serves as continued affirmation that our Frank H. Dotterweich College of Engineering is home to one of America’s leading environmental engineering programs.

“One of the things that the department does so well is get its students prepared to compete and to succeed on a global level. Our faculty know that when a student graduates from Texas A&M-Kingsville, they need to have practical, real world experience in addition to classroom academics. The environmental engineering program provides its students with that blend of field research, lab work and classroom studies that will allow them to prosper in the emerging global marketplace.”

Dr. Stephan J. Nix, dean of the Frank H. Dotterweich College of Engineering, said of the ranking, “The recognition of our environmental engineering program by U.S. News and World Report is a testament to the faculty’s hard work and commitment to excellence, and the talents and dedication of our students.

“The environmental problems facing South Texas, the U.S. and the world are extremely challenging and need world-class engineers to solve them. We are proud that our faculty and students are among the best addressing these issues.”

Dr. Kim D. Jones, professor and chair of environmental engineering, said of the U.S. News and World Report list, “The ranking is significant because it shows that, in addition to offering high quality ABET accredited undergraduate engineering programs to students, the Dotterweich College in Kingsville also has graduate programs on a par with some of the finest engineering institutions of higher learning in the nation such as Drexel, Oregon State, USC and Lehigh.

“The environmental engineering program at A&M-Kingsville has recruited and retained faculty scholars and mentors who have attained national recognition and a commitment to excellence which is demonstrated through their successful research funding achievements from the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency, and private centers of research excellence, such as the Health Effects Institute in Boston,” said Jones.

“These faculty members have attracted similarly committed, hard working students. Graduates of the program are starting to make their mark in the nation’s environmental protection and sustainability efforts within the EPA, other research centers and environmental engineering professional practice.”