I’ve heard that . . .

Embry-Riddle is a flight school.

Reality: Back in 1926, we were. Today, however, Embry-Riddle is an accredited university offering 35 degrees through the master level (see complete listing on center pages). While aeronautical science, for would-be professional pilots, is the most popular degree, our students also choose majors in aerospace, aviation, business, communication, engineering, management, safety and security, to name just a few.

Embry-Riddle is a military school.

Reality: We’re an independent university, but with strong ties to the military going back to World War II, when we trained American and British pilots and aircraft technicians. By the time the war ended, more than 26,000 men and women had earned their wings or technical licenses through Embry-Riddle, and we had won the praise of every branch of the armed services. We also trained aviators for the Korean conflict.

Today, one of every four students on our residential campuses participates in an Air Force, Army, or Navy ROTC detachment, and our AFROTC unit is the largest outside the Air Force Academy. Our Extended Campus teaching centers also educate thousands of service men and women at military bases throughout the United States and Europe.

Embry-Riddle has an all-male environment.

Reality: In our early days, we were just as male as the industries we serve. But today, as women fill more aviation and aerospace jobs than ever before, Embry-Riddle’s female enrollment is steadily increasing, as well. On our residential campuses, 16 percent of students are now women.

And we’re also taking matters into our own hands. We’re adding new degrees in fields – communication, engineering physics, and human factors psychology, for example – that have a special appeal to women, and others, such as air traffic management, computer science, and meteorology, that attract men and women in equal numbers.

Embry-Riddle trains terrorists.

Reality: After the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, the news media reported a rumor that one of the hijackers had graduated from Embry-Riddle – a story that was proved false by the FBI several days later.

What many people didn’t hear, though, was that one of our alumni was a victim of these attacks – David Charlebois (BS, Aeronautical Science, 1983), who was the first officer on American Airlines Flight 77, which hijackers crashed into the Pentagon. And since Sept. 11, many more of our alumni and students have been killed in action in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The reality: Embry-Riddle trains heroes.

Embry-Riddle is for gear heads and nerds.

Reality: Embry-Riddle students share a single-minded passion for aviation, aerospace and technology. They’re curious about what makes things tick, and why. They like to figure things out and make them better. But they’re also multifaceted individuals who enjoy other things, too, like sports, music, movies, travel, and the arts.

When they graduate, they hold exciting, responsible jobs in flight, space research, manufacturing, technology, and public relations. Their number includes astronaut Susan Kilrain, who piloted two space shuttle flights, Greg Feith, who led the ValuJet crash investigation, and Peg Billson, a vice president at Honeywell.

Others start and lead successful enterprises. Neil Morrow went from making snowboards to becoming CEO of SkyTaxi, an on-demand air service. Student Kevin Hawkins wrote and published a computer graphics textbook when he wasn’t pitching for Embry-Riddle’s baseball team. Business student Jamail Larkins, once one of America’s youngest pilots, flies around the country to talk up aviation careers to high school students.

Embry-Riddle is for single-minded, well-rounded people like these.

Embry-Riddle is located in Daytona Beach.

Reality: Partly true. Embry-Riddle has a residential campus in Prescott, Ariz., as well. We also offer degree programs at more than 130 education centers for adult students throughout the United States and Europe and through our Web-based distance-learning program.

The Leader, Spring 2004