UNIVERSITY PROFILE

Columbia University

New York, NY

AT A GLANCE

GRADE
A+

ACCEPTANCE RATE
4%

NET PRICE
$22,700

SAT RANGE
1480–1560

STUDENT SIZE
33,000+

POPULAR MAJOR
Economics

DISCIPLINE FOCUS
Business

STUDENT RATING
★★★★☆ 4/5
1,102 reviews

LOCATION
New York, NY

TYPE
4 Year · Private

WEBSITE
www.columbia.edu

What the School is Known For

From the School

Columbia University, founded in 1754, is one of the world's great research universities and the oldest institution of higher education in New York State. Located in Morningside Heights in Manhattan, Columbia offers the intellectual rigor of an Ivy League education with direct access to the world's most dynamic city.

Columbia is home to the only Ivy League journalism school, a top-ranked law school, a leading business school (Columbia Business School), and a medical center that is one of the nation's most prominent teaching hospitals.

The Student Body

From the School

Columbia College and the Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science together enroll approximately 8,900 undergraduates. With graduate and professional students across all schools, total enrollment approaches 33,000 — the largest of the Ivy League universities.

Columbia's student body is famously diverse and cosmopolitan, reflecting the global character of New York City. Students consistently rank the intellectual intensity and the city access as defining features of the Columbia experience.

Getting In

From the School

Columbia's acceptance rate is approximately 4%, among the lowest of any American university. Admission to Columbia College and to the School of Engineering and Applied Science (SEAS) are handled by the same office but evaluated separately by program interest.

Columbia offers Early Decision (binding) and Regular Decision application rounds. The University is need-blind for U.S. citizens and permanent residents and commits to meeting 100% of demonstrated financial need.

Academic Programs & Research

From the School

Columbia's Core Curriculum is one of the most celebrated required course programs in American higher education, requiring all Columbia College students to engage with Literature Humanities, Contemporary Civilization, Art Humanities, Music Humanities, and other foundational subjects. The Core ensures every Columbia graduate shares a common intellectual vocabulary regardless of their major.

Beyond the Core, Columbia offers majors in more than 80 fields and benefits from its proximity to the Columbia University Medical Center, the Earth Institute, and the renowned Data Science Institute.

Life on Campus

From the School

Columbia's Morningside Heights campus is a 36-acre urban oasis in Manhattan, with Low Plaza and Butler Library serving as the iconic centers of academic life. New York City itself functions as an extended campus — students regularly attend Broadway productions, financial conferences, gallery openings, and startup events as part of their education.

With over 500 student organizations and a famously politically engaged student body, Columbia's extracurricular life reflects the full complexity and energy of the city around it.

Living & Getting Involved

From the School

Columbia guarantees on-campus housing for all four years in a variety of residence halls ranging from traditional dorms to suite-style upperclassman apartments. First-year students live in one of several residence halls in the heart of campus, creating a close-knit community within the urban environment.

Students can also choose to live in New York City apartments, and many upperclassmen take advantage of Columbia-affiliated housing in surrounding neighborhoods. The combination of on-campus community and urban independence is a hallmark of the Columbia residential experience.

Athletics & Recreation

From the School

Columbia fields 29 varsity sports programs in NCAA Division I and competes in the Ivy League. Columbia's location in Manhattan is unique among Ivy League schools, requiring athletes to travel further for some home competitions while benefiting from training facilities in the heart of the city.

The Dodge Fitness Center in the heart of campus and the Baker Athletics Complex in Inwood serve the athletic and recreational needs of Columbia's diverse student body.

Student Support Services

From the School

Columbia's Office of University Life, the Center for Student Advising, and the Barnard-Columbia Writing Center provide comprehensive academic and personal support. The Core Curriculum Office also supports students navigating the shared curriculum that defines the Columbia College experience.

New York City's vast internship and networking ecosystem is an extension of Columbia's career resources. The Columbia Career Education office provides one-on-one advising, employer recruiting events, and alumni mentorship programs across every industry.

Wellness & Mental Health

From the School

Columbia Health's Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS) provides individual therapy, group counseling, crisis intervention, and psychiatric services to enrolled students. Columbia introduced a telehealth counseling option to expand access beyond the in-person clinic.

Columbia's student peer wellness educators and the Furman Counseling Center provide additional support layers, and Columbia's student health portal allows students to schedule appointments and access resources online at any time.

Plan a Campus Visit

From the School

The Columbia Undergraduate Admissions office holds information sessions and student-led tours on most weekdays and select Saturdays. Tours depart from the Undergraduate Admissions Welcome Center and take in the main campus quadrangle, Butler Library, and residential facilities.

Columbia's Urban New York experience means a campus visit can easily be combined with exploring Morningside Heights, Riverside Park, and nearby neighborhoods. Virtual information sessions and recorded tours are available for prospective students unable to travel to New York.

Career Outcomes & Placement

From the School

Columbia graduates benefit from direct proximity to New York City's finance, media, technology, and consulting industries. The Columbia Career Education office reports strong placement rates across finance, law, journalism, technology, and the nonprofit sector.

The Columbia Alumni Association connects students with a global network of over 300,000 alumni in virtually every country. Columbia's location in New York ensures that internship and full-time recruiting opportunities are unmatched in volume and diversity.

Fields of Study

From the School

Economics, Computer Science, Political Science, Psychology, and History are among Columbia College's most popular majors. The Fu Foundation School of Engineering offers programs in Computer Science, Electrical Engineering, Biomedical Engineering, and Financial Engineering.

Columbia's interdisciplinary programs — including the Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race and the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society — enable students to pursue integrative academic paths that span departments and schools.

Cost of Attendance

From the School

Columbia's undergraduate tuition is approximately $68,400 per year, with total cost of attendance — including New York City room and board costs — reaching approximately $93,000 annually. Living in Manhattan is expensive, and Columbia's financial aid program accounts for these higher costs in its aid calculations.

Columbia has committed to meeting 100% of demonstrated financial need and to keeping student debt levels as low as possible through its grant-first financial aid policy.

Financial Aid & Scholarships

From the School

Columbia meets 100% of demonstrated financial need for all admitted undergraduate students. The aid package is composed of grants, work-study, and family contributions — no loans are required as a condition of the award.

Columbia's financial aid office accounts for New York City's higher cost of living in calculating aid packages, ensuring that students from across the income spectrum can afford to attend. Families earning below $60,000 typically pay nothing toward tuition.