UNIVERSITY PROFILE

Northwestern University

Evanston, IL

AT A GLANCE

GRADE
A+

ACCEPTANCE RATE
7%

NET PRICE
$25,200

SAT RANGE
1440–1550

STUDENT SIZE
22,000+

POPULAR MAJOR
Journalism

DISCIPLINE FOCUS
Liberal Arts

STUDENT RATING
★★★★☆ 4/5
821 reviews

LOCATION
Evanston, IL

TYPE
4 Year · Private

WEBSITE
www.northwestern.edu

What the School is Known For

From the School

Northwestern University, founded in 1851 in Evanston, Illinois, is a leading private research university known for its exceptional journalism school, the Kellogg School of Management, the Bienen School of Music, and for a distinctive academic culture that prizes both rigorous scholarship and practical application.

Northwestern's location on the shore of Lake Michigan — just 12 miles north of Chicago — gives students the advantages of a residential campus community alongside immediate access to one of the world's great cities.

Northwestern's quarter system, which compresses the academic year into four shorter terms rather than two semesters, allows students to take more courses, explore more fields, and recover from a difficult term faster than at semester schools.

The Student Body

From the School

Northwestern enrolls approximately 8,200 undergraduates and 13,000 graduate and professional students. The undergraduate student body is academically accomplished and unusually diverse in its interests — Northwestern is one of the few places where a music student, a journalism major, and an engineer might be roommates.

Students often cite Northwestern's culture of collaborative achievement — the sense that peers are energetic and ambitious but also genuinely supportive of one another's success — as a defining feature of undergraduate life.

Getting In

From the School

Northwestern's acceptance rate is approximately 7%, making it among the most selective universities in the country. Applicants apply to a specific school within Northwestern — Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences, McCormick School of Engineering, Bienen School of Music, Medill School of Journalism, School of Communication, or School of Education and Social Policy — and are evaluated by that school's standards.

Northwestern offers Early Decision I, Early Decision II, and Regular Decision rounds. The University is need-blind for domestic applicants and meets 100% of demonstrated financial need.

Academic Programs & Research

From the School

Northwestern's six undergraduate schools offer over 125 combined majors and the flexibility to pursue minors and certificates across schools. The quarter system's pace allows students

to sample widely across disciplines in the first two years before focusing deeply.

Northwestern's signature WCAS Integrated Science Program accepts a small cohort of exceptionally talented science students each year into an accelerated, research-first curriculum. The Medill School of Journalism's combined degree programs with McCormick Engineering or Weinberg Arts and Sciences are among the most distinctive in higher education.

Life on Campus

From the School

Northwestern's Evanston campus stretches along the Lake Michigan shoreline, combining historic architecture with modern research and arts facilities. The lakefront is a social center — students skate in winter, swim in summer, and use the shore as a daily scenic backdrop to campus life.

Chicago's cultural resources, internship market, and entertainment scene are 30 minutes away by the Purple Line El. Over 500 student organizations, a lively Greek life, and Northwestern Arts programming ensure a full range of extracurricular options on campus as well.

Living & Getting Involved

From the School

Northwestern guarantees on-campus housing for all four years in a range of residential hall options from traditional dorms to suite-style upperclassman housing. First-year students live together on North Campus or South Campus in communities defined by residential life programming.

Northwestern's residential college system — including Slivka Residential College for STEM students and Shepard Residential College for arts and humanities — provides themed communities for students who want to live alongside peers with shared intellectual passions.

Athletics & Recreation

From the School

Northwestern competes in the Big Ten Conference and fields 19 varsity sports in NCAA Division I. Northwestern is the only private research university in the Big Ten, giving it a distinctive profile — academically elite while competing at the highest level of college athletics.

The Walter Athletics Center, the Welsh-Ryan Arena, and Ryan Field serve Northwestern's athletic programs. The women's lacrosse, women's basketball, and football programs have all achieved national prominence in recent years.

Student Support Services

From the School

The Northwestern Writing Place and the Searle Center for Advancing Learning and Teaching provide writing support and academic coaching. Each school within Northwestern employs its own academic advisors who guide students through curriculum requirements and career planning.

The Career Advancement office at Northwestern has particularly strong connections to Chicago's financial services, consulting, and media industries, as well as a national alumni network that actively supports student recruiting.

Wellness & Mental Health

From the School

Northwestern's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) provides free individual therapy, group therapy, crisis intervention, and psychiatric evaluation. CAPS introduced a Let's Talk program offering same-day consultations without requiring a formal appointment.

Northwestern's commitment to student wellbeing extends through residential life programming, wellness workshops, and peer counseling programs that create multiple layers of community support.

Plan a Campus Visit

From the School

Northwestern Undergraduate Admission offers information sessions and student-led tours on most weekdays and select Saturdays. Tours take visitors along the lakefront, through key academic buildings in each school, and into residential areas.

Northwestern Wildcat Days in April invite admitted students for a day of school-specific programming, class visits, and residential tours. Virtual tours and recorded information sessions are available through the admissions office for prospective students who cannot visit.

Career Outcomes & Placement

From the School

Northwestern graduates are sought after in consulting, finance, technology, journalism, arts, and entertainment. The Medill School produces some of the most successful journalists and media professionals in the country, and Kellogg MBA graduates are among the most recruited in the world.

Chicago's location as a hub for consulting, finance, and technology provides Northwestern students with an extraordinary local recruiting market. The Northwestern Alumni Association connects students with a global network of over 220,000 graduates.

Fields of Study

From the School

Economics, Computer Science, Communication Studies, Journalism, and Psychology are among Northwestern's most popular undergraduate majors. The Weinberg College general education requirements ensure all arts and sciences students develop breadth across the natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, and formal studies.

Northwestern's combined degree programs — including Journalism and Computer Science, and Theatre and Communication Studies — reflect the university's commitment to preparing students who can thrive at the intersection of traditional disciplines.

Cost of Attendance

From the School

Northwestern's undergraduate tuition is approximately $63,468 per year across all six undergraduate schools, with total cost of attendance — including room, board, and fees — reaching approximately $84,000 annually. Northwestern's financial aid program substantially reduces the net price for eligible students.

Northwestern's quarter system means three tuition payments per year rather than two; the University structures financial aid to account for this schedule.

Financial Aid & Scholarships

From the School

Northwestern meets 100% of demonstrated financial need for admitted domestic undergraduates. Aid packages prioritize grants over loans, and families earning below $75,000 typically pay no tuition.

Northwestern's merit scholarship programs, including the Residential College and School-specific awards, recognize students with exceptional talent in specific fields. The University awarded over $230 million in undergraduate financial aid in a recent academic year.