



Focus on American University

American University's 6,800 undergraduates and 5,400 graduate students attend classes on a traditional green campus in a gracious residential section of Washington, D.C., just 5 metro stops (or a short ride on the shuttle) from the city's main hub. The school's profile has been rising rapidly in the past decade, resulting in ever lower admit rates, and this year the percentage of admitted students who have decided to attend is the largest ever, resulting in a bit of over-enrollment and undoubtedly even greater selectivity in the future.

The campus has been designated a national arboretum, and all the buildings have been built or remodeled within the past five years. Construction continues now with new residence halls and buildings for the sciences, computer science and game design under way. One of only 22 schools on the national Green Honor Role, American University is the largest producer of solar power in the District of Columbia and is on track to be carbon neutral by 2020.

The proximity to all that Washington, D.C. has to offer in terms of internships, jobs and cultural experiences is a major draw for the students here, whether they are majoring in International Affairs, Communications, Business, the Arts or anything else. Classes, which tend to be small with 22 students being average, are all taught by professors who are also engaged in research or active practitioners in their fields, and students are encouraged to think creatively and tackle real world problems.

Students report a strong sense of community on the campus, which is expected to be 90% residential within the next two years. Most share a common ethos, tending to be politically active and passionate about social justice regardless of their academic majors. "Town Hall" meetings held each semester for students to communicate with the administration generate considerable excitement and spirited debate about matters like the university's investments in fossil fuels.

Academic majors, which students are not required to declare until the end of sophomore year, are housed in five divisions, the largest of which is the College of Arts and Sciences. Most of the more than 60 majors here are also available as minors, and double majoring is common, even in the sciences. This division is home to particularly strong programs in Creative Writing, Economics, History, Theater and Musical Theater.

The School of Communications is the fastest growing division, with programs in Journalism, Foreign Language and Communication Media, Public Communication, and Film and Media Arts. The latter program, with an emphasis on documentary film, is particularly renowned. Most faculty members throughout this division are practitioners in their fields.

The School of International Service, the largest such undergraduate school in the nation, has only a single major, but students may choose a thematic focus from eight options including Global Health and Anti-Terrorism. They enjoy many exceptional internships in the area, as do students in The School of Public Affairs which offers four majors: Political Science, Justice, Law and Society, and CLEG, an acronym for Communications, Legal Institutions, Economics and Government. Double majors across these two schools are common.

The Kagod School of Business offers a variety of programs leading to both B.S. and B.S.B.A. (Bachelor of Science in Business Administration) degrees. Students here, too, are encouraged to take advantage of internship opportunities, not just locally but also across the country through the "Road Scholars" program which enables them to receive course credit for work in a variety of high profile companies farther away. Kagod has its own Career Services to promote career development early in students' academic careers.

Across the university 89% of undergraduates complete one internship or more before graduating, and 72% participate in at least one of a wide array of Study Abroad programs ranging in length from one week to a full school year.

Admissions are holistic, with demonstrated interest an extremely important consideration. (Hence, students who apply under one of the Early Decision plans have a considerable advantage.) Applicants with GPAs of 3.5 or higher may opt not to submit standardized tests, but for those who do submit them, the SAT Critical Reading and Math sections are super-scored and the writing is not used.

Admissions officers look closely at the transcript to discern patterns and assess applicants in the context of their schools to determine how much they have challenged themselves. Most admitted students have taken a minimum of two or three Advanced Placement courses. Activities are important too, and admissions officers encourage students to report everything they do. Two letters of recommendation and the application essays help them identify students who are

active learners, involved community members, and knowledgeable about distinctive features of American University.

For the class admitted in 2014, the median GPA's were 3.56 to 4.02 weighted, median SAT's were 1210 to 1370, and Median ACT's were 27 to 31.

Thirty-five percent of students receive merit aid, and the university is committed to meeting 100% of demonstrated need and keeping tuition increases below the national average.

E.D. 1 is November 15th. E.D. 2 and R.D are January 15th.

