



## **Focus on Haverford College**

Haverford students are high achieving but not competitive with one another. Dean of Admissions Jeff Lord describes them as friendly, humble and eager to help each other. They “embrace differences,” he says, but notes that they are predominantly liberal, so a conservative applicant would have an admissions advantage because the goal is to have a full range of voices on campus.

Every student must do a senior thesis, and the research they do is on a level more commonly achieved at other institutions by graduate students. Ample funding is available to support students’ research as well as to send them to conferences.

Interdisciplinary work is valued and facilitated by three academic centers on campus that also help to fund it. Students can design their own integrated courses and projects.

Haverford’s science programs have long enjoyed a reputation for being particularly strong, Astrophysics and Physics especially. A joint Environmental Science program with Bryn Mawr recently received a major grant from the Mellon Foundation, demonstrating another value of the collaborative relationship between the two schools.

A new Documentary Film program is developing to be “extraordinary,” I was told, and the Urban Studies program is noteworthy for being unusual in a liberal arts college.

The Center for Peace and Global Citizenship funds internships abroad that promote social justice. Students can apply for these any time after their freshman year.

All Haverford students must fulfill core requirements consisting of 3 social science, 3 natural science, 3 humanities and one quantitative course as well as one year of a foreign language and a freshman writing seminar. They are also required to take 6 quarters of fitness courses. While a Haverford education is rigorous, students receive much support from the faculty and support services. In fact, I was told, the faculty do not give up on students, knowing that some of those who are most successful in the end had a rocky experience in the beginning.

Ninety-eight percent of the students and 60% of the faculty live on campus. Housing is guaranteed all four years, and 70% of the rooms are singles. There are no fraternities or sororities, but there are theme houses.

Academics are everyone's top priority, but the culture is about balance and openness to diverse perspectives, so "passionate athletes and artists feel at home." In their down time students utilize the city of Philadelphia quite a bit in addition to enjoying activities on campus like small parties and the many a capella and other performances that occur regularly. The honor code that dictates safety and responsibility appears to work insofar as the local EMTs report very little trouble occurring on campus. Students enjoy a variety of silly traditions, some of which like a surprise midnight water fight are designed to help make the freshmen feel part of the community.

Haverford has a Division 3 athletic program, and their softball and soccer teams have been doing very well recently, exciting student interest. Their varsity cricket team is noteworthy too.

Between a quarter and a third of the students each year represent minorities, and 12% of the students overall are international.

Admissions decisions are made holistically, with an eye to building a community of students with a broad range of qualities. Not everyone must be outgoing and talkative, as there is room, too, for those who express themselves best in writing or who make infrequent but important contributions to class discussion. The admissions office seeks students who are comfortable being themselves and will "take joy in an academic and social environment such as this."

Interviews are important and valued equally whether they are with an admissions officer, alumnus/alumna or current student. Applicants who live within driving range are expected to visit the campus, and it is up to the applicant to request an interview. Interviews can take place as early as March of the junior year.

Application deadlines are November 15 (Early Decision 1), January 1 (Early Decision 2), or January 15 (Regular Decision). The E.D. 2 option was recently added

to help the school compete for recruited athletes, but does not signify a greater commitment to early applicants than in the past, and there is no preference given for binding applications submitted one date over the other. Overall the acceptance rate is 25%. The median ACT scores for accepted students are 31 to 34. Haverford meets 100% of demonstrated need.

