



## **Focus on The University of Richmond**

The University of Richmond attracts ambitious students from all over the U.S. and abroad to its exceptionally beautiful campus, where 3,000 undergraduates enjoy an average class size of 15 and access to resources more often found at larger universities. The school spends more than \$1 million each year on generous fellowship grants to fund student research and projects in every field. Two hundred to three hundred students receive these each year.

The university has a law school right on campus as well as three undergraduate divisions: the School of Arts and Sciences, the Robins School of Business, and the Jepson School of Leadership Studies. Undergraduates all begin in Arts and Sciences, where programs are designed with the specific intent of teaching skills that will prepare them for later life such as oral and written communication, problem solving, quantitative analysis, and teamwork.

Required first year seminars are designed around a variety of themes, are capped at 16 students, and are all taught by professors, some of whom are even law school faculty. Throughout the school, professors get to know their students by name, and course grades are frequently based partly on attendance and participation. Majors are offered in Art, Music, Theater, Dance, and PEPPL, an acronym for Politics, Economics, Public Policy and Law, as well as the more common academic subjects.

After their first year, students may apply to a specific major in the Robins school, where they will be accepted provided they meet the requirements. To enter Jepson, they must apply during their sophomore year with several essays, and approximately 85% who do so are admitted.

It is not unusual for students to double major or major and minor across two schools, and interdisciplinary study is encouraged.

*Bloomberg Business Week* recently ranked Robins twelfth overall among undergraduate Business Schools in the U.S., and number one for International Business. The city of Richmond, with its population of almost one million people, ten Fortune 1,000 companies, and the Federal Reserve, provides students with a plethora of internship opportunities. In addition to being academics with Ph. D's, most of the Robins faculty have worked in the business world, and connections with business and government are closely maintained in part through an Executive-in-Residence program that brings three recent retirees to campus each year to mentor students. A program with partner universities overseas enables all International Business students to spend a semester abroad during their junior year while receiving the same assistance in obtaining summer jobs as their classmates in Richmond.

Experiential learning is an important element of the Robins education, as is professional development beginning freshman year. Sophomores all attend a "professional skills boot camp" in a hotel at the fall to prepare for the internships and job application and interview process. Throughout their academic careers, they are encouraged to participate in numerous competitions so as to position themselves well for future opportunities.

Jepson School of Leadership Studies gives students an opportunity to bring what they are learning in the arts, sciences and social sciences to the problem of leadership, and gives them access to many leadership opportunities. A core course requires them to work face-to-face with people in the city of Richmond, and the summer between their junior and senior year they are required to hold and write about an internship. Jepson students want to make a difference in the world, and when they graduate, they do so by pursuing careers in a wide range of spheres ranging from government, to health care, to non-profits, to education, to consulting firms.

Richmond students enjoy a strong sense of community and much campus spirit, some of it generated by the Division 1 sports. Ninety-four percent of students live on campus all four years, and much of their social life stays on campus although they also enjoy the city, in particular its renowned restaurant scene. Greek life is strong, but in lieu of hazing, the pledge process involves two weeks of gift-giving, and varied events planned for every Saturday night provide alternatives to the traditional party scene.

The student body is quite diverse in all respects, with 28% persons of color, 14% first generation students, 15% for whom English was not the first language, and 8% international. With only 34% hailing from the South, discourse on campus reflects diverse perspectives. The admissions office is in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of a five-year initiative to bring more Jewish students to campus. Perhaps due to efforts on the part of the Admissions Office to increase all types of diversity, the school has seen a dramatic increase in popularity. Since 2007, they have experienced a 50% increase in applications for first-year admission. That translates to a significant increase in selectivity.

The current median GPA for admitted students is 3.54-3.94, median SATs are Critical Reading 640-730, Math 650-740, Writing 540-730, and median ACTs are 30-33. Rigor of curriculum is most important, with admitted students having generally taken the most accelerated courses available in their school. Class rank is considered in context by the regional admissions officers, who know the high schools and read the applications. Demonstrated interest does not play a role in admissions decisions.

