



Focus on Boston College

Students at Boston College, which is actually located in suburban Chestnut Hill six miles from downtown Boston, enjoy a self-contained campus with both traditional and modern buildings, while also having easy access to the city via public transportation. And despite having the word “college” in its name, BC is actually a university, albeit one with an undergraduate focus as 10,000 of its 15,000 students are undergraduates. Its designation as an R1 Research University (a distinction awarded institutions whose research output is in the top 3% nationally) means that undergraduates have access to research opportunities that elsewhere would be available only to graduate students.

A Jesuit Catholic university, Boston College seeks to be inclusive. Approximately 70% of the students were born Catholic, and Mass is offered regularly in multiple campus chapels. The remaining 30%, who identify as Jewish, Muslim, Protestant, Buddhist and more, are supported by multiple campus organizations of their own, including a Hillel. LGBTQ+ students are welcomed and supported too by their own organization and multiple other campus resources.

Regardless of the students’ backgrounds and beliefs, B.C. is committed to nurturing their personal as well as academic growth. Service to the community is emphasized, and students are heavily engaged in local service work. Furthermore, the three questions all students are encouraged to grapple with are: “What are my God-given talents?” “What brings me joy?” and “What does the world need of me?” The hope is that they will emerge from college having identified a path through which they may bring together their answers to all three.

Applicants to B.C. must apply to one of the school’s four divisions, the largest of which is the Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences. Two-thirds of the undergraduates are in that school. The second largest is the Carroll School of Management, which has 25% of the student body. Next come the Lynch School of Education and Human Development and the Connell School of Nursing, each of which has 5%. The admit rates to these schools differ and vary from one year to the next, but for 2021 applicants, it was 19% for Arts and Sciences, 18% for Management, 15% for Education and 12% for Nursing, which saw a steep increase in applications that year.

The most popular majors include Finance, Marketing and Accounting within Carroll as well as Economics, Biology, Political Science, Communications, Psychology and History within Morrissey. However, with one exception, applicants to these schools are not admitted by or committed to any particular major.

Human Centered Engineering is the single major that students must apply to within Morrissey directly from high school. This major, which is unique to BC, was introduced last year upon discovering a demand for engineers with the general training that will give them greater flexibility than those trained in more specialized silos. Each year B.C. will enroll in this program 50 students who want technical training with the broad-based liberal arts education that will prepare them to tackle our world's biggest challenges in health, energy, and the environment. In conjunction with the introduction of this program, the university opened a \$167 million Center for Integrated Science and Society in January of 2022.

B.C.'s core curriculum requires students to take coursework in 15 different disciplines including natural science, social science, theology, philosophy, English, history, cultural diversity, the arts, and mathematics. A multitude of interdisciplinary offerings means that all freshmen may take at least one. For example, students in a course called Economics and Legalization of Healthcare, team-taught by an economics professor and a law professor, explore issues related to the Affordable Care Act, the opioid addiction crisis, and the legalization of marijuana. Additionally, freshmen who so desire may choose one of two streams, "Complex Problems" and "Enduring Questions," that enable them to approach subject matter through multiple disciplines.

Boston College students enjoy a strong sense of community, and most opt to live on campus as many years as possible. (Half are guaranteed four years of residential housing, and half are guaranteed three years.) While first year residence halls are more traditional, those for upperclassmen are suites and apartments.

Division 1 athletics in 33 varsity sports generate great excitement, especially the national champion Lacrosse team. Approximately half of the students are involved in non-D1 sports too, and a 244,000 square foot recreation center that opened in 2019 has two swimming pools, a climbing wall, golf simulation labs and much more.

Demonstrated interest counts only insofar as applying Early Decision 1 or 2 confers a considerable advantage in admissions. For the class that entered in 2021, B.C. admitted 40% of the ED1 applicants, 38% of the ED2 applicants, and 19% of the Regular Decision applicants.

Median SAT scores for enrolled students who submitted them were 1430-1510 and median ACT scores for enrolled students who submitted them were 33-34. That year, 40% of the applicants submitted test scores and 60% did not. However, 60% of the admitted students submitted them, and B.C.'s internal research has led the admissions office to believe that the scores have value in predicting student success.

Students planning to major in the arts are invited to submit a portfolio or audition.

Boston College is one of only 20 private colleges in the U.S. that is both need-blind in admissions and committed to meeting 100% of student need. For the year 2020-2021, they awarded \$161 million in need-based aid. The Gabelli Presidential Scholarship is the sole merit-based award, but the average debt for the class of 2020 was only \$16,500.