



Focus on University of Rochester

For academically strong students seeking a mid-size university with a truly diverse student body, the University of Rochester is an excellent option, especially if they are interested in undergraduate research opportunities and/or music. The university emphasizes learning by doing, and an impressive 77% of the 6,000 undergraduates engage in research at this tier-one research institution which has 11,650 students in all. Its campus on the banks of the Genesee River is about two miles from downtown Rochester, where the Eastman School of Music is located. This conservatory's association with the university enables students to go back and forth freely, and many Arts, Sciences & Engineering students take music lessons from graduate students at Eastman. It is possible to apply to both the University of Rochester and the Eastman School of Music. If admitted to both, students may either choose whichever they prefer or attend both in a five-year dual-degree program.

Over the past decade the University of Rochester, long known for its academic strength especially in the sciences, has become increasingly diverse in every respect. Approximately one-third of the undergraduates are now international, hailing from more than 120 countries, and the students profess to be actively concerned about what's going on in the outside world and willing to engage in discussion with people whose backgrounds and perspectives differ from their own. Determined to protect free speech and avoid self-censorship, the Democratic and Republican clubs, both of which are active on campus, do a lot of partnering to create events and forestall any potential problems with guest speakers.

The university also has a strong Pride movement and is making a concerted effort to ensure that all students, including those who are gender non-conforming, feel welcome and comfortable on campus.

“The Rochester Curriculum” has been a hallmark of the university since the 1980’s, ensuring students an education that is both individualized and balanced. Regardless of the intended major they indicate on the application, nobody enters with a defined major, and in the beginning, everyone is encouraged to explore their interests with the help of a first-year advisor. All first-year students are required to take a writing course, but students get to choose from the more than 70 different themes around which these are centered.

The other requirement comes once students declare their majors, all of which are considered to be in one of these three areas: natural sciences, social sciences, or humanities. Everyone except for engineering majors must take a cluster of courses in each of the two divisions that their major is not in. Engineering students are required to take a cluster in only one of the other divisions. Many of the clusters are focused around a theme. For instance, humanities majors might opt for a set of courses in the natural science division that are all related to the farm-to-table movement. Double majoring is easy, and about one-third of Rochester students opt to go that route. Minors are also available, including one in music.

First and second year students are required to live on campus, where many of the buildings are connected by underground tunnels that are popular during the snowy winters. Juniors and seniors live mostly in off-campus buildings close by that are owned by the university.

Parties on and off campus are popular, some hosted by the fraternities and sororities to which 25% of the students belong, but there are always many other options as well. Most Friday and Saturday nights there is a big show on or off campus, and the clubs and organizations sponsor many events ranging from a Capella concerts to Outing Club and Ski Club trips. The athletic program includes 23 D-III varsity teams and one D-I team, squash, in addition to club and intramural sports. Football games have begun attracting more spectators now following the recent construction of an enclosed stadium that protects them from the elements.

The largest number of applicants to the university typically indicate an interest in engineering and the sciences, but currently only 20% of enrolled students are in the engineering division; the rest are in the arts and sciences. The University of Rochester Medical Center right nearby offers a combined undergraduate and medical degree program to a very small, highly select group of students who apply directly from high school with a separate application submitted early.

The application process for the rest of the university is holistic, with admissions officers particularly interested in students who have displayed an inclination for research through independent study and internships. Since demonstrated interest plays a role, applicants are advised to connect with an admissions counselor if they cannot get to campus. Interviews are

recommended and are offered both on and off campus, with both admissions officers and alumni.

The “test flexible” policy means that students are asked to submit any of the following: the SAT (no essay required), the ACT (no essay required), or two or more of one of the following: SAT Subject tests, AP tests, IB tests or AS and A-Level Exams (3-4 exams are preferred for the latter). Submission of a graded paper of fewer than 500 words is now recommended as well.

Approximately one-third of each class is admitted Early Decision. The deadlines are 11/1 for Early Decision and 1/5 for Regular Decision, but applicants who wish to be considered for merit scholarships must apply by 12/1. The University of Rochester meets 100% of demonstrated need and also gives merit aid, the average merit award being \$20,000 for one year, reevaluated annually.

For the freshmen who entered in 2018, the SAT medians were: 630-710 for Reading and Writing and 650-770 for Math. The median Composite ACT scores were 29-33.

