"Princeton University is home to a diverse community of scholars and students who hail from a dazzling variety of ethnic, religious, racial, geographic and socioeconomic backgrounds. The perspectives that all of us bring to campus enrich the University in a myriad of ways, smashing old stereotypes, provoking new visions of what our world can be, and creating a campus life that is vibrant, colorful and inclusive."

Christopher L. Eisgruber
President
Class of 1983

"We are reaching out to students from every background. We value their aspirations, goals and intellectual successes. When students join our diverse community, they bring their viewpoints, experiences and talents, which contribute immensely to our campus."

Janet Lavin Rapelye
Dean of Admission
Princeton students are advocates, artists, athletes, community builders, engineers, leaders, poets, travelers.

These are just some of the words students featured in this book may use to describe themselves. Through “Diverse Perspectives” you will meet a handful of the undergraduates who come to Princeton from all over the country and the world. You may find yourself relating to their stories, or sharing similar backgrounds and experiences as them. Or you might simply be inspired by their personal narratives.

You will gain a sense of life on campus, including our academic programs, housing and dining options, campus centers and student organizations, and advising and support resources.

In addition, you can learn about Princeton’s generous financial aid program and our continued efforts to enroll more students from low- and middle-income backgrounds. This book also includes information about the application process and how to visit our beautiful campus.

More details and stories from other students and faculty are available on the Office of Admission website at admission.princeton.edu.

We hope you will read further about the diversity of people and perspectives that makes Princeton so special.
What democracy looks like

I joined the Princeton Students for Gender Equality (PSGE) club my first year. It’s not just a “we are feminists on campus” club. It is a group that is open to all. Conversation about important issues is unreserved. We are interested in sharing our opinions, probing difficult questions and confronting challenging issues.

I was introduced to the Women’s Center through PSGE. The Women’s Center has hosted events that some deem provocative, but I find these forms of dissent to be productive forces for sparking conversations across campus. At Princeton, there are many opportunities to talk about gender issues, but a group like PSGE is vital because it provides an open forum for conversation. We are undergoing a gender revolution in the United States, and Princeton and its students have been very cognizant of that. The University recently expanded gender-inclusive housing for sophomores, juniors and seniors. Two or more students can choose to share any multiple-occupancy dorm room with roommates of any sex or gender.

PSGE sponsored a bus to the Women’s March on Washington in January 2017, and I marched with my friends in New York City. By marching, I was standing up for the values instilled in me through my own experiences in a small, but meaningful, way.

As the historian for the Orange Key, the student-run group that leads campus tours, I began to research the history of women at Princeton. Princeton enrolled the first class of undergraduate women in 1969, and I will be graduating just 50 years later in 2019. Although Princeton now has equal gender distribution, this history is important to me because it informs particular aspects of student culture.
I take pride in the legacies of the strong women who have come before me. My grandmother, who was an active participant in the civil rights movement, and my great-grandmother, who walked across the country when she was 90 to advocate for campaign finance reform, inspire my ambition. As a politics major, Princeton alumnae, like U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justices Elena Kagan and Sonia Sotomayor, as well as strong leaders like former First Lady Michelle Obama and Wendy Kopp, the founder of Teach for America, give me courage and fuel my curiosity.

Princeton is filled with passionate people and diverse perspectives. I find my classmates to be intensely curious. That’s very apparent in our class discussions, but through my involvement in the Women’s Center and PSGE, I’ve found that some of our most important conversations are happening outside the classroom in campus centers, over meals in the dining halls, and in whispered exchanges in libraries.
Princeton undergraduates represent a variety of backgrounds and places. Our students hail from all 50 states and more than 90 countries—spanning the globe from Azerbaijan and Brazil to Vietnam and Zimbabwe. We work hard to create a community on campus that is vibrant, dynamic and inclusive.

**Who We Are**

**Total undergraduates**

**Classes of 2017-2020**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>48.3%</strong></td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>51.7%</strong></td>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>12.2%</strong></td>
<td>International</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**American students of color**

- 8% African American
- <1% American Indian
- 21% Asian American
- 10% Hispanic/Latinx
- 4% Multiracial
- <1% Pacific Islander

**First-generation students**

- 13.4%

International students enrolled in the Classes of 2017-2020 are from...

- Albania
- Argentina
- Armenia
- Australia
- Austria
- Azerbaijan
- Bahamas
- Bahrain
- Bangladesh
- Belgium
- Bolivia
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Brazil
- Bulgaria
- Canada
- Chile
- China
- Colombia
- Costa Rica
- Côte d’Ivoire
- Croatia
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Dominica
- Ecuador
- Egypt
- El Salvador
- Ethiopia
- France
- Georgia
- Germany
- Ghana
- Greece
- Haiti
- Honduras
- Hong Kong
- Hungary
- Iceland
- India
- Indonesia
- Iran (Islamic Republic of)
- Ireland
- Israel
- Italy
- Jamaica
- Japan
- Kazakhstan
- Kenya
- Korea, Republic of
- Lebanon
- Lithuania
- Macedonia
- Malaysia
- Mauritius
- Mexico
- Moldova
- Mongolia
- Morocco
- Myanmar
- Nepal
- Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Nigeria
- Norway
- Pakistan
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Philippines
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Russia
- Rwanda
- Saudi Arabia
- Singapore
- South Africa
- Spain
- Sri Lanka
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Syria
- Taiwan
- Tanzania
- Thailand
- Trinidad and Tobago
- Turkey
- Turkmenistan
- Ukraine
- United Arab Emirates
- United Kingdom
- Venezuela
- Vietnam
- Yemen
- Zimbabwe

**by country of citizenship**
I remember asking myself at International Orientation, "Am I really that international?" After meeting my classmates from around the world, I was surprised to hear that many students had lived in several locations. Even beyond the international cohort at Princeton, I was in awe of how my peers viewed the world as wholly accessible.

I was born in Ecuador. I moved when I was 2 years old to Bloomington, Indiana, where my father works in academia. I return to Ecuador each summer, but Ecuador and Indiana are the only two places I’ve ever called home. I have Ecuadorian values as a result of my upbringing, but American society has shaped my ideals and goals.

My unique perspective as an international student rooted in American culture has been an asset as an orientation leader at the Davis International Center. I help educate my international friends about academic and social life in the United States. It’s a big shock to many people. I can help international students acclimate to Princeton culture because I understand how they’re feeling. I now call Princeton home.
How Princeton has changed me

Princeton has made me a much more careful person. And I say that in the best way possible. I think about so many things that I never bothered to consider before. Things about my identity. Things about this world. I’ve definitely changed here. I think every person is a mosaic of the people they meet. I always pick up little idiosyncrasies from my friends. I’m much more outspoken now; more willing to stand my ground because of what I’ve learned and my experiences. That is an empowering feeling — to recognize that I’m an individual who has something to say and that it is worth saying.

One of my favorite classes was “Afro-Asian Masculinities,” taught by Kinohi Nishikawa, assistant professor of English and African American studies. We engaged in a cross-cultural analysis of African American and Asian American experiences. It was so directly related to my own identity. I’m a first-generation Chinese American and I grew up on Staten Island, New York. The class really forced me to explicitly consider intersections of different ethnic, racial and gender identities.

It also helped me understand who I was in relation to history and in relation to other underrepresented or marginalized minorities. We ate at an Afro-Asian restaurant in Harlem for a class trip. I loved it.

Soon after the class ended, I began a year term as co-president of the Asian American Students Association (AASA). It was critical for me to consider what it means to bring together a diverse range of people. The group includes students who identify as East Asian, South Asian and Pacific Islander. It was definitely a challenge, but a rewarding one. We led projects where students started to think about their identity and how it applies to other people. We also raised awareness about broader issues, such as the intersectionality of Asian American identity with sexuality, gender and class. Without AASA, I would not have bothered to think about these things and how they all play into each other.

Slam poetry is also an outlet for me. I never wrote before Princeton, but I did speech and debate in high school. I thought, “Well, poetry is pretty cool,” so I tried out for the spoken-word group Songline. It’s a very real and raw form of expression. You can’t write a good slam poem without being vulnerable. I wrote one poem about sucking it up. In my family, we don’t really talk about things. We just kind of suck things up and pretend they didn’t happen. My poem traced that tendency to my relationship with my dad and how we both do the same thing.

There are moments when I walk around campus and I have that surge of magic from my first days. I look at the beauty and think, “Wow, I go here!” Or one time in class, I was answering a question and it just hit me how much I have learned here. That’s a very special thing about this place.
Our students are encouraged to explore different interests and organizations on campus. Campus centers provide a hub for multicultural, service and other activities. They are open to all students. Through our campus centers, you can join people who may share identities and interests similar to yours, as well as learn about those who are different from you. You also can raise awareness and educate others about your community through center programming and events.

**AccessAbility Center.** An inclusive gathering space where students can study, relax and learn about ability and difference. The space is designed for universal access. Features include an automatic door opener, adjustable-height desks and chairs, computer workstations for users with visual or hearing impairment, an American Sign Language alphabet display, and a seasonal affective disorder lightbox.

**Carl A. Fields Center for Equality and Cultural Understanding.** A place where students explore critical issues by initiating programs and discussions on race, class, gender, sexual orientation, social justice and civic engagement. The Fields Center provides designated space for several cultural affinity groups and features meeting rooms, a seminar room and a library.

**Davis International Center.** The center offers an array of services and programs for international students and scholars, including advising on immigration and visa matters and consulting on intercultural issues. The center also hosts intercultural programs and events.

**Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Center.** Professional and student staff work to support and empower lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex and asexual students by providing community-building, education, events and initiatives. The center advises more than 15 student groups, including those for first-year students, students of color, transgender and asexual students.

**Pace Center for Civic Engagement.** Service at Princeton is about making a difference in the world. Through the Pace Center you can learn to do service well and learn how and why embracing difference is part of gaining a greater understanding about yourself and the communities around you.

**Women’s Center.** The center provides a supportive atmosphere for women students and hosts an array of cultural and educational programs for students of all genders.
Building bridges between the Deaf and hearing communities

A lot of people ask me why I chose Princeton. They wondered why I didn’t join my friends at various Deaf universities. They were thinking, “Why are you leaving us? Why are you going to Princeton alone? You are going to be with only a few people able to use American Sign Language (ASL). The Deaf community wants you, with your character and talents, to stay in our community.” (People in the Deaf community spell the word with a capital “D.”)

But I believe that coming to Princeton is an amazing opportunity. There has never been a better time for the Deaf to venture into the hearing community and spread awareness of the Deaf culture and ASL.

Princeton is a wonderful cultural melting pot. Many people I’ve met here are very open-minded and always welcoming. It’s delightful how you can meet someone new every day — someone who comes from an entirely different culture from your own — and engage in a profound cultural exchange.

I came to Princeton because I am on a mission to construct cultural bridges connecting the Deaf and hearing communities. With all the cultural exchanges going on between all the amazing students at Princeton, people are always eager to discover new communities such as the Deaf.

I have wonderful friends here who have learned to sign very well. It has been amazing to see how fast they’ve picked up ASL. With these friends, I feel very at home here. I’m a physics major and I rarely rely on interpreters outside of class because with my signing friends I have access to almost all aspects of Princeton social life.

The Princeton community is incredibly inclusive. I truly made the right decision to become a Tiger.
Myesha Jemison

Junior from Virginia Beach, Virginia
Creating a better community for all students

I care deeply and genuinely about people. My care for others and my desire to create change is why I ran for Undergraduate Student Government (USG). I serve as president, and I am the first black female to hold the position.

When I first came to Princeton, I didn’t necessarily see myself running for office or getting involved in politics within the “Orange Bubble,” which is how students affectionately refer to Princeton’s campus. However, a lot of these sentiments changed as I navigated through the University as a student who carries a multitude of identities. I’m black. I’m a woman. I come from a low-income background. And I am the first in my family to go to college. These identities have had a strong impact on my experience in relation to my peers. I knew there were ways in which Princeton could be a better community for students with marginalized identities.

My goal is to make USG more representative of Princeton students, and I think we’re well on our way. However, much like Princeton, we still have a way to go. Some of what we have worked on this year has been focused on “passing the mic” to demographics of Princeton’s population who haven’t always been included in conversations. We’re working on projects and task forces that better support students from low-income backgrounds, student-athletes and “independents” (juniors and seniors who choose not to have a University meal plan). In addition, during my time here, activism through student organizations like the Black Justice League and DREAM Team, an immigrants’ rights group, has been strong. As USG president, I believe it is important to be responsive to students. I work to support their interests and acknowledge their concerns.

My mom always stressed to me the importance of education. I could have gone to school closer to home, and I’m sure my mom would have liked that, but she encouraged me to attend Princeton because it was the school I believe I was meant to attend. The Freshman Scholars Institute (FSI), a seven-week summer immersion program before first year, reaffirmed my existence on campus. I was surrounded by students from similar backgrounds. I was introduced to faculty who supported me and genuinely cared about me — not only as a scholar but as a human being. I was able to acclimate to Princeton in a comfortable setting. Most importantly, I was reminded that I, along with the other students in my cohort, am deserving of the victories I have achieved thus far.

I’m studying Spanish and environmental studies. I wanted to find an academic path that combined my interests in anthropology, science and technology. After taking a course titled “Latino Global Cities,” the decision was easy. I have taken opportunities to pursue research projects abroad in Brazil and Cuba, which have culminated in my junior year independent papers. At Princeton, I have great freedom to be a scholar.
Departments and Programs

Students select an academic concentration after their first year for B.S.E. degree candidates and after sophomore year for A.B. degree candidates. Students also may earn certificates in other areas of interest. For example, a molecular biology major may earn a certificate in visual arts, a computer science major may earn a certificate in global health and health policy, or an African American studies major may earn a certificate in sustainable energy. More information on degrees and requirements may be found at princeton.edu/academics.

A.B. degree

Students pursuing a Bachelor of Arts may major in any one of the following academic departments in the humanities, the natural sciences and the social sciences:

- African American Studies
- Anthropology
- Architecture
- Art and Archaeology
- Astrophysical Sciences
- Chemistry
- Classics
- Comparative Literature
- Computer Science
- East Asian Studies
- Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
- Economics
- English
- French and Italian
- Geosciences
- German
- History
- Mathematics
- Molecular Biology
- Music
- Near Eastern Studies
- Neuroscience
- Philosophy
- Physics
- Politics
- Psychology
- Religion
- Slavic Languages and Literatures
- Sociology
- Spanish and Portuguese
- Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs

B.S.E. degree

Programs of study in the School of Engineering and Applied Science lead to the degree of Bachelor of Science in Engineering. Students can major in one of the following academic departments:

- Chemical and Biological Engineering
- Civil and Environmental Engineering
- Computer Science
- Electrical Engineering
- Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering
- Operations Research and Financial Engineering
Certificate programs

Students also can choose from among 53 certificates of proficiency, which offer a chance to pursue focused study that supplements the primary work of their major. Students may earn more than one certificate.

- African American Studies
- African Studies
- American Studies
- Applications of Computing
- Applied and Computational Mathematics
- Archaeology
- Architecture and Engineering
- Biophysics
- Cognitive Science
- Contemporary European Politics and Society
- Creative Writing
- Dance
- East Asian Studies
- Engineering and Management Systems
- Engineering Biology
- Engineering Physics
- Entrepreneurship
- Environmental Studies
- Ethnographic Studies
- European Cultural Studies
- Finance
- Gender and Sexuality Studies
- Geological Engineering
- Global Health and Health Policy
- Hellenic Studies
- History and the Practice of Diplomacy
- Humanistic Studies
- Jazz Studies
- Judaic Studies
- Language and Culture
- Latin American Studies
- Latino Studies
- Linguistics
- Materials Science and Engineering
- Medieval Studies
- Music Theater
- Musical Performance
- Near Eastern Studies
- Neuroscience
- Planets and Life
- Quantitative and Computational Biology
- Robotics and Intelligent Systems
- Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies
- South Asian Studies
- Statistics and Machine Learning
- Sustainable Energy
- Teacher Preparation
- Technology and Society
- Theater
- Translation and Intercultural Communication
- Urban Studies
- Values and Public Life
- Visual Arts
It's easy to find your spiritual home at Princeton. The Office of Religious Life is the epicenter for exploring your faith on Princeton's campus. It includes 15 chaplaincies and hosts weekly programs for students, faculty and staff seeking conversations and community rooted in faith. The office supports many religious and secular groups and promotes interfaith dialogue to allow students to learn from and with each other about what they believe, providing an environment of care and support.

The Office of Religious Life hosts a range of activities, including daily prayer service, sacred text study, musical performances, community service, workshops and meditation. A typical week might include: Yoga Wisdom for Conscious Leadership and Living, Jazz Vespers service in the University Chapel, Shabbat services followed by dinner at the Center for Jewish Life, and a presentation from the "Islam in Conversation" lecture series.

The Center for Jewish Life/Hillel is instrumental in helping students explore their connections to Judaism and Jewish life on campus. The center includes a kosher dining hall where all students are welcome to dine. Chabad at Princeton also hosts religious, educational and social programs for students.
Finding my voice in the Muslim community

I am co-president of Princeton Muslim Advocates for Social Justice and Individual Dignity (MASJID). As part of my work, we’ve organized a series of teach-ins through which we attempt to address misconceptions about Muslims and Islam in the campus community and beyond. One was about Shari’ah law; a second was about the long history of Muslims in America. I work closely with Imam Sohaib Sultan, Princeton’s Muslim chaplain in the Office of Religious Life, on MASJID’s projects. So far, he has been one of the most positive influences on my experience at Princeton.

Being vocally, visibly Muslim is something that is pretty new to me. Everyone in high school knew I was Muslim, and I speak Arabic along with English at home, but it was not a primary or even secondary identity of mine. At Princeton, I’ve been exploring my personal faith more and how I want to live my life. As a leader in a Muslim group, my faith is now a visible feature of my identity. And I’ve learned a lot from my friends on campus about how they pursue their faith.

I’ve been fortunate that I’ve been placed into a lot of different groups on campus that have helped me adjust to Princeton. My residential college adviser is a great support, as well as my “zee” (advisee) group of other first-year students who live in my dorm. I am also a member of Princeton Tonight, the University’s broadcast television show, where I act in comedy skits. As I explore my religious and personal identity, comedy is a familiar source of comfort.

I’m here primarily to gain knowledge. I’m interested in political thought, and I plan to major in politics or history. I could see myself doing humanitarian work at the United Nations or at an NGO (nongovernmental organization). I find that my interests change all the time, which is not a bad thing. It’s like Muhammad Ali said, “A man who views the world the same at 50 as he did at 20 has wasted 30 years of his life.”
Melana Hammel

Junior from Manahawkin, New Jersey
Taking pride in the ‘hidden minority’

I grew up along the Jersey Shore. My favorite days were spent sitting on the sand, reading a book and listening to the ocean. My mom is a home health aide and also works nights in retail, and my dad is a security guard. We had financial ups and downs and moved several times throughout my childhood. My parents decided to raise us without a television in our house. They prioritized reading and learning for the sake of learning.

I went to a public high school in Ocean County, New Jersey. Though I had a close group of friends, Princeton was the first place where I really clicked with people on an intellectual level. Here, I began to embrace my full self and my enthusiasm for learning.

My perception of Princeton as a high school student wasn’t completely accurate. I only knew of Princeton’s reputation as an Ivy League school filled with smart people. That was the tip of the iceberg, I realized. I had no idea what lay beneath the surface: the undergraduate opportunities for research, more than 30 different majors, the diverse student body.

Cost was a major factor in my decision to go to Princeton. My parents always supported me, however I knew I would have to make college work myself. I remember the day we received my financial aid award letter. My parents’ expected contribution was $20 per year. My parents were shocked. It was cheaper for me to attend Princeton than a state school or even a community college! Princeton believed in my potential and made it possible for me to attend regardless of my financial background.

My first year, I took an introductory computer science course and fell in love. I decided to major in it because I enjoy how computer science makes my brain work. You have to combine logic and creativity, while considering both the details of a problem as well as the big-picture solution.

On campus, I’m a member of the varsity women’s track and field team. I walked onto the team and I compete in the 800-meter run — it’s two laps as fast as you can. I’ve never before been surrounded by a group of such intelligent, strong, talented, tough, engaging women who push me to find the best parts of myself every day.

I’m also co-chair of the Princeton Hidden Minority Council (PHMC). We are a student group that advocates for first-generation college students and students from low-income backgrounds. We work with administrators to provide support for our community, and also promote dialogue about socioeconomic differences in order to reduce stigmas surrounding class.

We call our organization the Hidden Minority Council because it’s not always obvious who is first-gen or low-income. Neither of my parents went to college, and I’m on full financial aid. Joining PHMC halfway through my first year transformed my Princeton experience and my sense of self. PHMC is a place where I feel my identity as first-generation, low-income is acknowledged and accepted. A lot has changed on campus since I first joined. The dialogue surrounding class and background, as well as our presence here, has expanded. I believe in the work PHMC does and I am proud to be a part of creating a more inclusive campus community.
Princeton is committed to access and affordability, with one of the most generous financial aid programs in the country. We provide aid in the form of grants — not student loans — to meet your full demonstrated financial need. Our aid program does not require any borrowing, so students can graduate debt free. Sixty percent of all students receive aid. To learn more, visit admission.princeton.edu/cost-aid.

**Meeting your needs.**

100% of tuition is covered by Princeton’s average aid package for students admitted to the Class of 2021 with family incomes up to $160,000.

**Grants, not loans.**

100% of tuition, college fee, and room and board for families earning up to $65,000 is covered for students admitted to the Class of 2021.

**Zero debt is possible.**

82% of recent seniors graduated debt free.

22% of students in the Class of 2021 qualified for a Pell grant.
Financial aid for students admitted to the Class of 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gross family income</th>
<th>Percent qualified</th>
<th>Average grant</th>
<th>What it covers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$0 – 65,000</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>$64,010</td>
<td>Full tuition, college fee, room &amp; board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$65,000 – 85,000</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>$59,085</td>
<td>Full tuition, college fee, 71% room &amp; board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$85,000 – 100,000</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>$55,870</td>
<td>Full tuition, college fee, 50% room &amp; board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000 – 120,000</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>$53,705</td>
<td>Full tuition, college fee, 37% room &amp; board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$120,000 – 140,000</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>$50,210</td>
<td>Full tuition, college fee, 14% room &amp; board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$140,000 – 160,000</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>$47,180</td>
<td>Full tuition</td>
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<td>$160,000 – 180,000</td>
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<td>$200,000 – 250,000</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>$30,750</td>
<td>65% tuition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$250,000 and above</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>$22,470</td>
<td>48% tuition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tuition = $47,140  Residential college fee = $850  Room and board = $15,610

Your grant may vary from the above average based on the Financial Aid Office’s individual evaluation of your family’s resources, including assets other than the family home or retirement funds.

Cost of attendance 2017-18

- **Tuition**: $47,140
- **Residential college fee**: $850
- **Room & board**: $15,610
- **Expenses** (books, supplies, travel, recreation, etc.): $3,500

**Estimated total**: $67,100

Note: Because the cost of goods and services continues to rise, charges for 2018-19 are expected to increase modestly.

The Princeton Financial Aid Estimator

Each student’s need is determined individually based on family resources, and is met in full with grants and a campus job. Princeton’s confidential Financial Aid Estimator can help you determine if you would qualify for aid and the type of award you might receive. The estimator is available at [admission.princeton.edu/cost-aid/financial-aid-estimator](http://admission.princeton.edu/cost-aid/financial-aid-estimator).

Note: The aid estimator is valid only for U.S. and Canadian families.
At Princeton, "FLI" stands for students who identify as first-generation and/or low-income. Approximately 17 percent of students in the Class of 2021 are among the first in their families to attend college and 22 percent are eligible for federal Pell grants for low-income students. The "FLI" community continues to grow on campus, as do programs that empower students from all backgrounds to thrive at Princeton.

The Scholars Institute Fellows Program, known as SIFP, is a central resource for first-generation and low-income students. The program was launched by the University in 2015 to provide mentorship opportunities, academic enrichment and a support network of students, faculty and staff. About 250 undergraduates are members.

Dean of the College Jill Dolan says SIFP offers a comprehensive approach, helping students navigate both their academic and social lives on campus. She says SIFP complements other groups, like the student-organized Princeton Hidden Minority Council.

"By focusing on peer and faculty mentoring, workshops about professional development and campus leadership, and discussions about how to best take advantage of the numerous support systems available to all Princeton students, SIFP helps integrate students who come to college without a deep knowledge of navigating an academic environment like Princeton," Dolan says.

SIFP recognizes that first-generation and low-income students may not have had the same level of support in high school as other undergraduates entering college. Programs include peer mentorship groups led by juniors and seniors, a fellows program of faculty and staff mentors, academic enrichment workshops, professional development sessions where students learn skills like how to write a cover letter, and social events and trips off campus.

First-year student Leslie Chan (pictured at center of photo, across the table) says, "my Mentorship 101 workshop with Dr. Nimisha Barton (right), associate director for the Freshman Scholars Institute and Programs for Access and Inclusion, taught me that the definition of mentorship encompasses much more than an individual receiving guidance from a more experienced person. I realized it's also a relationship. After finishing my first finals at Princeton, I was waiting for the train to New York City at Princeton Station, where I ran into Dr. Barton. After a long wait, we learned the trains were cancelled due to high winds. I thought I would have to delay my trip home. Instead, Dr. Barton came up with a new plan to get to the city and invited me along. I was shocked to be included. This was a very special form of mentorship."
From first-generation college student to a day at the White House

We wait in a line to go through the first security clearance. Soon after, metal detectors and police dogs are added to the process. At the end of this, I am handed a green identification badge. I have been granted permission to enter, not only the presidential residence, but even greater than a building that flies our nation’s flag — the heart of America. Out of all people, why have I been invited to enter such an iconic symbol of America?

This event in 2016 may have been even more difficult to foresee for my father, who at around my age had already left his home in South America, not speaking a hint of English, chasing what had been coined as the “American Dream.” Who would have thought that his son would be entering the White House several years later?

My path to Princeton, which played a part in my invitation to the White House, was far from the “typical” student at Princeton. Neither of my parents completed any schooling past the fifth grade and the last time a student from my high school attended an Ivy League institution was never. However, my mother, who single-handedly raised my sister and me after the passing of my father, instilled a unique drive in me. My mother made me aware of the struggles she and my father had gone through in order for me to receive what was out of reach for them: an education. She made me realize that an education would be pivotal for my future.

I understood what my mother meant and shot for the stars — the Ivy League. However, I did not know how I would get there.

Leadership Enterprise for a Diverse America (LEDA) helped connect my hard work with the opportunity to attend an institution like Princeton. LEDA seeks to identify high-achieving socio-economically disadvantaged high school students and help them attend our nation’s most selective institutions. During the summer of my junior year in high school, I was selected to attend LEDA’s Aspects of Leadership Summer Institute on the Princeton campus, where I decoded the college application process and received ACT-prep courses and college guidance.

Fast-forward to November 2016, and I was nominated by LEDA to attend President Barack Obama’s White House Summit on Advancing Postsecondary Diversity and Inclusion. The event was a mix of students, higher education leaders, researchers, officials from the Department of Education and many other stakeholders in the education field. It was amazing to get an insider’s perspective on the research and listen to the lawmakers who construct our nation’s educational policies.

I am very grateful to have had this opportunity. I was able to better understand key issues in higher education, and also offer insights from a student’s perspective. Attending this White House event was an unforgettable experience, especially as I reflect on my own journey to Princeton and my experience thus far.
Subjects I never imagined existed

I did not know exactly what I wanted to study when I first came here. I liked computer science, but I was unsure whether that was something in which I wanted a career. It was only after speaking with professors and seeing the potential areas of study that I chose electrical engineering as a major. From learning about information signals with Assistant Professor Paul Cuff to logic design with Professor Sharad Malik, going to Princeton really exposed me to subjects that I never even imagined existed.

Electrical engineering first interested me because I wanted to learn about building computers from a high- and low-level perspective. However, the major at Princeton turned out to be much more than that. Electrical engineering includes areas ranging from quantum computing to security and privacy. I have been able to work on hardware and software projects, such as face recognition, robotic vehicles and computer architecture simulators. I’m also pursuing certificates in applications of computing and robotics and intelligent systems.

I’m president of the National Society of Black Engineers Princeton chapter, the class representative for the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, and a peer tutor at the McGraw Center for Teaching and Learning. I tutor students in Physics 103/104. I really enjoy interacting with the first-year engineers who mostly take this course. The first year can really be a make

Hans Hanley

Junior from Windermere, Florida
or break moment for many engineers at Princeton, and encouraging and helping these engineers through their first two semesters gives me immense satisfaction.

I’ve interned at Google during the summer and it has been absolutely amazing! I met so many passionate and intelligent software engineers with such extensive technical expertise that I was blown away. My work included a security project for the Google Docs and Drive Security Team. I was able to see the project’s impact almost immediately as I coded throughout the summer.

Thinking back to my first campus visit freshman year of high school, I knew Princeton was my top choice as I walked around admiring the Gothic architecture. I quickly felt a sense of belonging, and I felt the same way when I visited again at the end of high school after I was accepted. Other schools could not really match that feeling of certainty I had while on Princeton’s campus. Combine that with the focus on undergraduates and the smaller class sizes and I was sold on going to Princeton.

I had always thought of Princeton as an exceptional place where intelligent people came together to make an impact on the world. And this has been proven again and again. Nearly every person I meet is concerned not primarily with himself or herself, but how they could make a difference to the people around them or the world at large. The professors and students go through grueling hard work to accomplish their goals. The only thing that has really changed during my time here is that my abstract idea about Princeton has been grounded.
Princeton has more than 300 student organizations, which are created and run by students with support from the University. There are countless ways to engage with classmates who share your background and interests, as well as opportunities to join organizations where you can explore new interests and learn from others. Organizations range from cultural, dance, theater, language, music, faith, civic action and much more. And if you can’t find the exact group you are looking for, students are always encouraged to start new organizations.

A sampling of some student organizations

- African Students Association
- Asian American Students Association
- Athlete Ally
- Black Arts Company - Dance
- Black Arts Company - Drama
- Black Student Union
- International Students Association of Princeton
- Journal of East Asian Studies
- Minority Association of Pre-Health Students
- National Society of Black Engineers
- Natives at Princeton
- Order of Black Male Excellence
- Pride Alliance

- Princeton Association of Black Women
- Princeton Bhangra
- Princeton Chinese Theatre
- Princeton Ethiopian and Eritrean Students Association
- Princeton Hidden Minority Council
- Princeton Latinos y Amigos
- Princeton Progressive
- Princeton Tory
- Princeton Students for Gender Equality
- Princeton University Latinx Perspectives Organization
- Princeton Women in Computer Science
- Society of Women Engineers
- South Asian Students Association
- Umqombothi (African a cappella)
- Woke Wednesdays Podcast
- Women’s Political Caucus
Natives at Princeton

Raising awareness and celebrating heritage

Natives at Princeton (NAP) is devoted to fostering dialogue and action on Native American and indigenous issues. It is one of many cultural student organizations, which are open to all students. You do not need to identify as a Native American or indigenous person to be a member. Anyone interested in indigenous culture and traditions is welcome. (Students in the group use both the terms Native American and American Indian.)

NAP’s leaders have revitalized the group’s activities on campus. They collaborated with Whitman College to create the annual “Night of Native Cuisine” during Native American Heritage Month each November. Whitman College dining hall procures ingredients from American Indian suppliers and works with Native students to develop recipes that highlight the swath of food from the Americas. Forest mushroom salad, pumpkin seed-crusted steelhead trout, succotash-stuffed acorn squash, blue corn bread and sunflower seed cake are some of the dishes served.

The students recently hosted the annual conference of the Ivy Native Council. It was the first such meeting held at Princeton, bringing together students and alumni from various Ivy League universities. The council works to promote and preserve understanding of indigenous cultures of the Americas, to raise awareness of indigenous issues, and to foster networks among American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, First Nations and other indigenous groups.

One of NAP’s symbols is the tipi. It represents an idea of community. Each year, students raise a tipi on the lawn in front of the University’s Prospect House to raise awareness about their group and encourage conversation. The tipi also symbolizes a common space where Native people from around the world can discuss important issues and celebrate their heritages. Each new event organized by NAP represents another stake that grounds the tipi’s canvas to Princeton.
Embracing who I am

I come from a household of immigrants. My father came to the United States from Pakistan to study and later married my mother in India. Then they both moved to upstate New York, where I was born. Most of my father’s siblings and their children lived close by, so it was like having ten parents and seven older siblings. It was amazingly fun, loving and dysfunctional, as it often is with big families.

My family is quite religiously Muslim, and so am I. I found solace with God from a young age and have found constant peace in my faith throughout my life at Princeton as well.

I realized that I was attracted to the same sex at a young age. But sadly, being gay is something many in my family are not comfortable with. In high school, I felt like I was lying to myself all the time. Islam also values truthfulness and I knew that I could no longer live with this part of me in hiding. That’s when I knew that I had to accept my homosexuality as a blessing.

The LGBTQIA community at Princeton is amazing. I’ve found so many wonderful friends who are genuine, humble and kind. Honestly, I didn’t know how accepting the campus would be, but I was surprised to find that it was accepting of me. I also was unsure how the Muslim community would react to me being out. I was very surprised to find the Muslim community has been one of the most accepting, loving and compassionate places on campus.

That’s not to say that my experience generalizes to everyone. I’m sure that individuals within the LGBTQIA community have had different experiences here. So, there’s certainly still work to do, but I would invite an LGBTQIA student to join us in making Princeton a more accepting and open place. One of the ways I try to do this is by serving as an LGBT Peer Educator. Peer Educators talk to incoming students in various groups about LGBT life on campus. We act as student liaisons of the LGBT Center and help raise awareness about LGBTQIA people and issues.
I’ve changed in many ways here. I think my Princeton friends have made me more patient, humble and affectionate. I’m also in the running club. I’m grateful that I’ve found so many people in different groups where I can discuss so many things: politics, poetry, home life, religion, movies, books and science.

I’ve learned that we aren’t meant to be comfortable all the time. Sometimes when we talk about identity politics, the conversation is framed through an individualistic lens, yet I’ve learned that my identities aren’t just about me, they’re about the people I love as well.
Advising and Resources

The University has a wide range of resources to support you along your academic journey and to help you succeed in our community.

Faculty advisers. All first-year students are assigned a faculty adviser, who will introduce you to academic life at Princeton, support your exploration of the curriculum, assist with the selection of courses and eventually help you decide on a concentration.

Residential college community. The residential college dean and director of studies help students shape their academic plans, and peer academic advisers in all disciplines offer their perspectives on how to make the most of the educational experiences Princeton offers.

Writing Center. Writing Center fellows are trained to consult on assignments in any discipline and can help at any stage of the writing process. Students can schedule free, one-on-one conferences with experienced writers.

McGraw Center for Teaching and Learning. Students can learn advanced strategies to master large reading loads, take effective notes, study more efficiently, prepare for exams and use digital media in Princeton classes. The free workshops, learning consultations and technology training provide individualized skills and strategies.

Career Services. Beginning as early as their first days on campus, Career Services helps students reflect on their values, beliefs and strengths, and learn how their interests and experiences can lead them to meaningful work. Students can receive personalized support on a variety of topics, including self-assessment, choice of major and career field, exploration of career-related interests, pursuit of internships and employment, and application to professional and graduate schools.

Disability Services. The Office of Disability Services offers a range of services to provide students with disabilities equal access to the educational opportunities and programs available at Princeton.

University Health Services (UHS). This is the primary health care provider for students. The accredited facility offers a comprehensive range of medical and counseling services, as well as health education, outreach and wellness programs. Approximately 80 percent of all undergraduates receive services from UHS annually.
Becoming the person I want to be

I visited Princeton as a prospective student on a frigid Sunday morning in February. Seeking refuge from the biting wind, my mother and I tucked into the Princeton University Chapel, where I saw a woman preach from the pulpit for the first time in my life. In that moment, I knew Princeton was the college for me. I longed to attend a school that promoted women not only in religious studies, but also in religious life on campus.

My favorite classes have been the ones that were the most challenging in the moment. Two that come to mind are “Stolen Years: Youth Under Nazis in World War II” with Professor Froma Zeitlin and “Who Was or Is Jesus?” with Professor Elaine Pagels. These classes not only required me to read hundreds of pages of critical scholarship a week, but also challenged me to fundamentally reframe how I conceptualize academics. Professors Zeitlin and Pagels are now both mentors of mine and encourage me in my studies and vocation. In fact, my independent research is an intersection of their academic disciplines: the Departments of Classics and Comparative Literature and the Department of Religion, respectively.

I once overheard a professor say to a prospective student: “Choose the school that will help you become the person you want to be.” I unknowingly followed this advice myself as an undergraduate. I knew I wanted to be that woman in the collar, preaching from the pulpit, and I knew that Princeton could help me get there. The woman I saw on the cold day in February was the Rev. Alison Boden, dean of religious life and the chapel. Dean Boden has become one of my dearest mentors. Thanks to her, I have been affirmed in my sense of vocation and have been given countless opportunities to serve and thrive in the church. I am becoming the person I want to be. I have preached twice in the Princeton University Chapel and read the lectionary at weekly services, and I am in the formal process to become a priest in the Episcopal Church.
Living and Dining

Where you live and what you eat will be a major part of your life on campus. That is why we want your housing and dining experience to feel like a home away from home.

Residential colleges. All first-year students and sophomores are required to live in one of the University’s six residential colleges. The colleges are hubs where students live, eat, study and socialize. The college community creates connections and fosters friendships among the variety of students who live there.

At the end of sophomore year, students can choose to live in a residential college or live in other campus housing for juniors and seniors. Regardless, juniors and seniors have the chance to participate in activities at the colleges.

Dining halls. First-years and sophomores eat most of their meals in the residential college dining halls. The dining halls change their menus daily, offering culturally diverse cuisine and options for different dietary needs with a focus on sustainable dining. Juniors and seniors who do not live in the colleges can still eat two free meals a week in the dining halls.

Eating clubs. Eating clubs serve as dining facilities and social centers for juniors and seniors who choose to join one of the 11 clubs, although first-years and sophomores are often invited to meals or events. The clubs are operated independently by student officers and alumni boards. Six of the clubs conduct an application process, while five invite members to simply sign up. Almost all club members live in campus housing. Some juniors and seniors who join a club and live in a residential college split their meal plans between their college and club. The financial aid awards for juniors and seniors include increased meal allowances to help cover the cost of eating club membership.

Kosher and Halal dining. The Center for Jewish Life/Hillel (CJL) offers kosher meals for the entire campus community. Students of all backgrounds eat at the CJL. Students also may have a kosher meal delivered to their college dining hall. All dining halls offer halal options.

Independent dining. Some juniors and seniors choose to make their own eating arrangements on or off campus. Many of these students live in independent housing on campus, which includes four-person suites with individual kitchens or dormitories with common kitchens.

Student food cooperatives. Food co-ops, including vegetarian and international options, are student groups that cook and eat dinners together at a common kitchen on campus.

Campus cafés. Cafés serving a wide variety of foods — sandwiches, pizza, salads and more — are located throughout campus.
A taste of home

I live on campus in Rockefeller College (affectionately called “Rocky”) and the dining hall is known for its Indian meals on Saturday nights. There is usually a line out the door before dinner starts. The chefs work really hard to make the food as authentic as possible. The lentil curry I had the other week was something my mom could have made. Honestly, if you gave me that lentil curry and my mom’s dish, I might not have been able to tell the difference.

My parents are from Kolkata, India, though I was born in Illinois. I was raised eating Indian food pretty much every meal. Only for lunch would I bring a sandwich or something to school. Our family is from the Bengal region and Bengali food focuses on fish and light curries. We also eat a lot of rice and vegetables. Paneer, which is a fresh cheese, is a big part of Bengali cuisine. We had paneer with almost every meal back home. I am really glad to see the chefs at Rocky use paneer in their Indian dishes.

I never expected the Indian food at Princeton to be so good. I knew they served some Indian dishes, but I sort of assumed it was just going to be some rice or vegetable curry once in a while. I was shocked at how authentic it tastes, and appreciate how the chefs collaborate with students to get their feedback and ideas for new recipes.

Whenever we have Indian food, I will text a picture of it to my parents. Sometimes they worry about me being at college and not adjusting, but this helps them see that I feel at home and feel really welcome here.

I’ve also learned a lot about other cuisines through the dining halls. I never heard of farro before coming here and now I really like it. There are also cultural food nights in the dining halls, like Asian-themed dinners or Latin-themed dinners. I hope other students appreciate learning about Indian culture through the food as much as I enjoy discovering new cuisines at the dining halls.
A complex, curious world

I participated in Princeton’s Bridge Year Program before my first year. Bridge Year is a tuition-free program that allows a select number of incoming students to do community service work in international locations before they start at the University.

I spent nine months with other students in Urubamba, Peru. I worked with ProPeru, a nonprofit focused on public health, environmental protection and other issues. Most days I was covered in mud, building more efficient wood-burning stoves to reduce the amount of wood burned and limit the smoke emitted in people’s homes. I also taught English, learned Spanish, hiked, played soccer, danced, ate delicious Peruvian food and got lost in the mountains.

I knew joy in Peru like I had never known it before. I found that, in service, my life had been imbued with meaning; wrapped in the love of my host family, my peers and the overwhelming beauty of the place. Bridge Year made me realize I care most about figuring out how to do good for the world. It also introduced me to a part of the world the United States often neglects or subjugates. Most of the world doesn’t live like us.

Bridge Year showed me what matters and what doesn’t. Whenever the stressors of Princeton begin to weigh on me, I think about that. What I will remember is not my grade on this paper but those evenings spent with my Bridge Year host dad, Fenacho, looking at the stars.

My experience in Peru also influenced my decision to major in Spanish and earn a certificate in Latin
American studies. I’m also pursuing certificates in theater and creative writing. The Department of Spanish and Portuguese feels like home. I’ve formed real relationships with professors. It’s the only department I know of that has dance parties to salsa music with graduate students, undergraduates and professors. Plus, they’re extremely flexible and I have the freedom to do the sort of creative/ academic combination that I’m interested in.

I’ve poured a lot of my time on campus into being a residential college adviser, which I find immensely rewarding. A couple of older students saved me my first year, demonstrating that there are many ways to exist here for people of all kinds, and I wanted to try to do the same for some incoming students.

Princeton is like any other place — being here has its good moments and its challenging ones, its joys and its miseries. It has people you’ll like and people you won’t. No place is a paradise; the values of everyone in a community will never entirely match your own. But, in other ways, Princeton is not like any other place. It has such a vast wealth of resources (of all sorts) that nearly anything feels possible here. One of the lessons Princeton has taught me is that nothing is so easy. This place, as any place or anything or any person, is extraordinarily complex. And I really do think it’s what you make of it. The materials are so rich that your creation just might be something special.
We hope you will further explore what makes Princeton special by visiting the Undergraduate Admission website at admission.princeton.edu. There, you can read more about our diverse community of students and faculty, get a sense of our beautiful campus, learn about academics and areas of study, plan a visit and review the process for applying to Princeton.

You can explore Princeton through our virtual tour, which is available in four languages, at admission.princeton.edu/virtualtour. Additionally, a campus tour and information session hosted by the Office of Admission is a great way to experience the University firsthand. Campus tours are conducted by Orange Key student tour guides throughout the year. General information sessions led by admission officers are available on weekdays and a limited number of weekend days in the fall. Schedules are available on our website.

Another way to get a feel for the Princeton community is to seek out someone who knows us, including students, alumni, school counselors or friends. You can start with our student blogs at admission.princeton.edu/blogs for a range of perspectives from current students. You may also wish to learn more about the interests of our faculty. Princeton undergraduates have direct access to many of the best minds in the world, and all faculty members teach as well as engage in scholarly research. You can meet a few of our faculty members through faculty profiles on our website.

If your research suggests Princeton is a good match, please consider applying. The admission staff considers each application individually, evaluating personal as well as intellectual qualities.

Princeton’s financial aid program is one of the most generous in the country. Our financial aid program provides grants and campus jobs — not student loans — to meet your full demonstrated financial need. Many students graduate debt free. The University is committed to ensuring that all qualified students have the opportunity to experience Princeton, regardless of their financial circumstance.

You may request a fee waiver if you are from a low-income background, or if the application fee is a hardship for your family, and you are applying for financial aid. Please note that applying for a fee waiver will not disadvantage your application in any way.
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Interactive campus map:
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Travel resources

Driving and rail service instructions:
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Recorded directions: 609-258-2222

Campus parking information:
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Parking information in town:
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The Office of Admission is located in Morrison Hall, named in honor of Toni Morrison, the Robert F. Goheen Professor in the Humanities, Emerita, at Princeton and a recipient of the 1993 Nobel Prize in literature. She was the first African American to be awarded the Nobel Prize in literature. In addition to the Nobel Prize, Morrison won a National Book Critics Circle Award for “Song of Solomon” in 1977; a Pulitzer Prize for “Beloved” in 1988; the Commandeur de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in 1993; the National Humanities Medal in 2000; the Ordre National de la Légion d’honneur in 2010; the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2012; and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences Emerson-Thoreau Medal in 2017.
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