

Grinnell College

Grinnell, IA

Niche: This is the very rural version of the liberal schools that are that 2nd tier of elite, prestigious schools after the Ivy League. With extremely competitive admissions and a sticker price that rival schools like the University of Chicago and Carleton College, students get a very liberal academic structure and mindset amongst the vast isolation of “Anytown, USA”

5 Things to Remember
1. The only general education class is 1 writing class called a “Tutorial”. Tutorials are offered from a range of themes that the students can pick from or get assigned to. The teacher of this course then serves as the students’ first academic advisor (2024)
2. Sticker price = \$87,098, but Grinnell meets full demonstrated need without loans for all admitted students and considers all applicants for merit scholarships (2024) Students can choose to take loans if that’s how their family wants to pay their share. With a \$2.5 billion endowment, the ability to cover the families’ needs is legit. The FAFSA and CSS Profile are both used to calculate need.
3. 12.7% acceptance rate <ul style="list-style-type: none">- About half of the incoming class will be filled via the 2 rounds of Early Decision- Includes about 40 Questbridge students- Supplemental essay is sent out after initial application is submitted, so pay attention to communication received from the school- Demonstrated interest is important, specifically visiting campus and interviewing and especially for non first generation students
4. 100% of students will engage in research or an in-depth creative project before graduation <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 150+ students will do this for 4 credits in the summer for a minimum stipend of \$3400- More than 40% of students complete a Mentored Advanced Project (MAP)
5. Grinnell College is a VERY liberal school in a VERY rural town of only about 10,000 people. A local business owner reported that this often leads to a control dynamic, though the athletics teams are supposedly strongly supported.

ADDRESS: 1227 Park St, Grinnell, IA 50112

PHONE: 641-269-3600

WEBSITE: <https://www.grinnell.edu/admission>

DIRECTOR OF ADMISSIONS: Sarah White. (Assistant VP of Admission - Sarah Fischer, VP for Enrollment - Joe Bagnoli)

ILLINOIS/CHICAGOLAND REP:

Christian Morris (morrisch2@grinnell.edu).

SETTING: Rural

TYPE: Private

MALE TO FEMALE RATIO: 54% female, 46% male

ENROLLMENT: Undergraduate only - 1700 students

1 in 5 students are international

1 in 4 are domestic student of color

Illinois is the #1 feeder state followed by California

39% double major

70% of students study abroad in over 100 pre-approved programs

Take 4 classes per semester to graduate on time, but you can essentially write your own major

Outcomes

57% go to work

- But only 1/3 of these report that their job is directly related to their major

27% go to grad school

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS: 66% of enrolled students were in the top 10% of graduating class. 80% of students were in the top 25%. ACT: 31-34, SAT: 1410-1520. Currently on a test-optional pilot program for at least the next two years.

DIVERSITY %: 19% of students are international students and 27% are domestic students of color.

FIRST-GEN %: 14%

PELL ELIGIBLE %: 18%

FRESHMAN TO SOPHOMORE RETENTION %: 93%

GRADUATION RATE %: Students starting in 2017:

- 74% 4-year
- 86% 5-year
- 87% 6-year graduation rate

HIGH SCHOOL COURSE REQUIREMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS: No official requirements.

Recommended: 4–5 academic subjects for each term in 10th–12th grades

- 4 years of English
- 4 years of natural science, 2 of which should be lab science
- 3 years of a foreign language
- 2 years of social science (3 recommended)
- 4 years of mathematics (including calculus for students interested in STEM)

(OUT-OF STATE) TUITION & FEES, BOARD & ROOM (ESTIMATE): Sticker price - \$87,098, but Grinnell meets full demonstrated need without loans for all admitted students and considers all applicants for merit scholarships.

OUTSTANDING MAJORS (3-7):

- Computer Science (consistently the most popular major)
- Economics (consistently the second most popular major)
- Biology/Biological Chemistry (very popular with pre-med students. Unique opportunities related to prairie conservation at the Conard Environmental Research Area)
- Political Science (Unique opportunities related to the Iowa caucuses and the Grinnell College National Poll)
- Mathematics (Lots of hands-on, interdisciplinary learning opportunities through the Data Analysis and Social Inquiry Lab).
- English (Unique opportunities within creative writing due to our proximity to the University of Iowa Writers' Workshop)
- Psychology (Lots of research opportunities, including observational studies at the Grinnell College Preschool Laboratory)

Engineering is a 3+2 program with a number of other elite institutions

MISCELLANEOUS (NEW DEVELOPMENTS, UNIQUE PROGRAMS OR FEATURES):

- Individually Advised Curriculum
 - Only one required class for students outside their major, a writing class called the First-Year Tutorial.
 - Each student has three advisors - an academic advisor (a professor), a career advisor, and a residence life coordinator.
- Response to SCOTUS Decision on Race-Conscious Admission
 - Grinnell remains committed to admitting and enrolling a diverse class of students.
 - Updated review process to abide by SCOTUS decision, including by suppressing race information from the Common App.
 - Updated our "Why Grinnell" optional supplement
 - "Grinnell's core values include creating and supporting a community that is respectful, egalitarian and focused on the common good. How might your background, awareness of human difference(s), and/or eagerness to be exposed to new ideas allow you to thrive at Grinnell? Your response should be a minimum of 200 words and no more than 450 words."
 - Planning to expand our Laurel Scholarship and Mentorship Program, to establish a national scholarship program, and to expand partnerships with CBOs.
 - Hired full-time Black student specialist and Latinx student specialist in Student Affairs (in addition to LGBTQIA+ student specialist and associate director of first-gen and low-income student programming).
- Curricular updates
 - New education studies concentration, distinct from our previous education licensure program.
 - New statistics concentration, distinct from the mathematics department.
 - New African Diaspora Studies department.
- Union of Grinnell Student Dining Workers (UGSDW)
 - First and only wall-to-wall undergraduate student union, established in 2022.
 - Established a formal agreement with the College in 2024 which includes higher pay for student employees and a standard disciplinary procedure across all on-campus jobs.
- Civic Engagement Quad

- Renfrow Hall, the residence hall at the core of the CEQ, is named after the first Black woman graduate of Grinnell and oldest living alum, Edith Renfrow Smith '37. The residence hall will feature apartment-style dorms for students.
- The Civic Engagement Quad is designed to promote engagement with civic issues in the town of Grinnell and will include an event venue and a green space.
- Set to open in fall of 2024.

****The opinions expressed in this document are those of the counselor who wrote these notes. Readers are welcome to use the written feedback as a guide, but are encouraged to do their own research, talk with college/university staff, and visit the schools themselves to formulate their own opinions.*