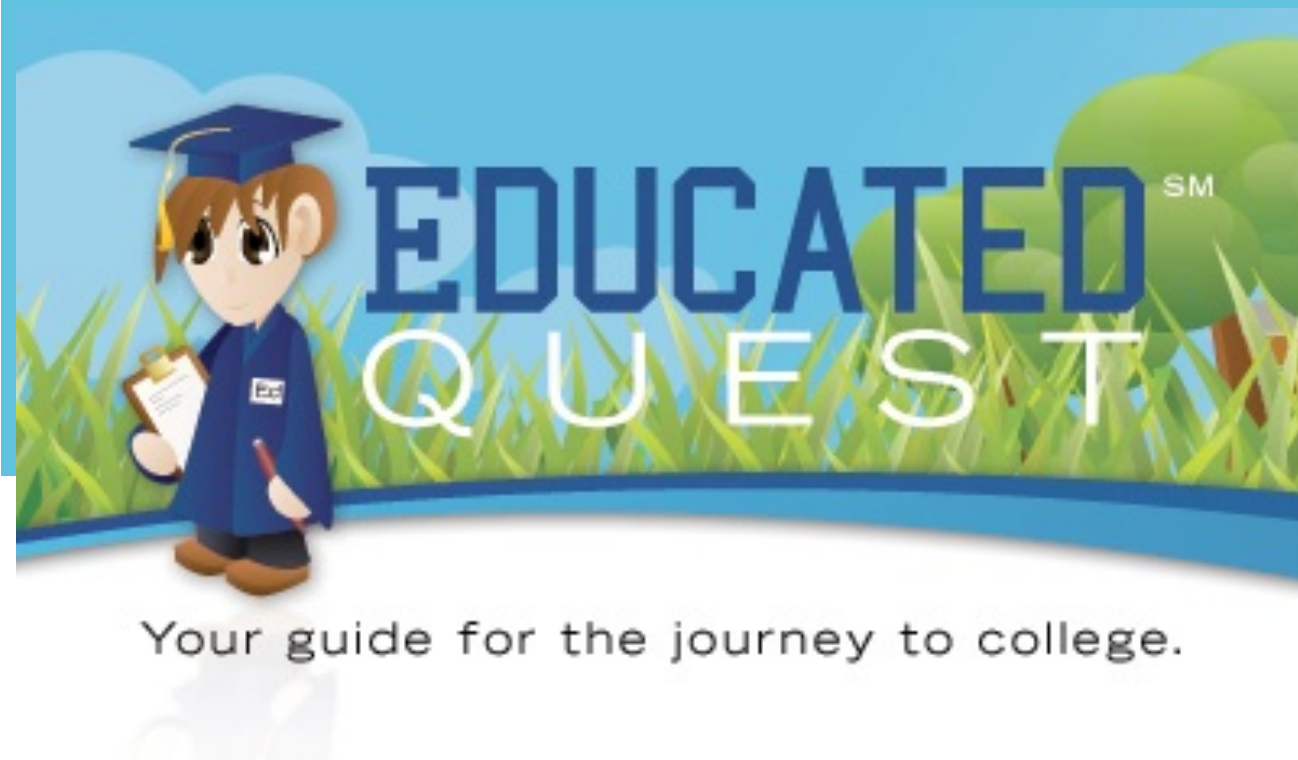


Profile: Binghamton University



Background

Introduction to Binghamton

Background

Founded in 1946 as a satellite campus of Syracuse University, Binghamton University is the most selective of the research universities in the State University of New York (SUNY) system. With just under 16,000 undergraduate and graduate students, it is also the smallest. Binghamton has operated at its current campus for 50 years, first as Harpur College, formerly one of only two publicly supported liberal arts colleges in New York State, then later as the State University of New York (SUNY) at Binghamton. It has been informally recognized as Binghamton University since 1992.

The university's focus on the undergraduate led education writer, and former admissions director, Richard Moll to label Binghamton as a runner-up on his list of "Public Ivies" in a 1985 book. A 2002 book, *The Public Ivies*, written by education experts Howard and Matthew Greene, re-affirmed Binghamton's academic stature. Today, the school is noted not only for being selective for a state university--less than half of those who apply get in--it is also lauded for high retention and graduation rates as well as its value for the money.

Among the students who entered Binghamton in 2007, 69 percent graduated within four years; over 80 percent finished within six. Among state universities larger, smaller or equally mid-sized only the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, University of Michigan, UCLA, UC-Berkeley, UNC-Chapel Hill, the University of Virginia and the College of William and Mary have been consistently better at guiding their students to a bachelor's degree within four years. Freshman retention cracked 90 percent for the classes that entered in 2012 and 2013. [These numbers are posted for a student body where more than a quarter of the students qualify for scholarship aid through the Federal Pell Grant program.](#)

Among the schools previously listed, only UCLA has a higher percentage of Pell-eligible students, and it is a much larger school with far less room for non-residents, who pay considerably more than Binghamton students do.

It is clear that Binghamton has admitted students who are satisfied with their educational experience and are capable of doing the work. Not many state universities in the U.S. can make the same claim. Binghamton is also the most geographically diverse of the SUNY university centers. Thirty percent of the undergraduates come from outside New York State, evenly divided by out-of-state and international students (largely China, India and Korea). In addition to attracting students from neighboring states such as New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts, Binghamton freshman classes have greater numbers from California, Florida and Texas. This past year alone, between 75 and 80 applicants from the San Francisco Bay area were offered admission.

However, Binghamton for all of its successes is not as highly ranked in *U.S. News* as institutions of similar size and similar accomplishments. With approximately 13,300 undergraduates Binghamton is “mid-sized” for a research university, public or private. The University actually has a smaller undergraduate enrollment than nearby Syracuse University and similarly successful students. Yet Syracuse ranks 58th in the magazine’s 2015 rankings while Binghamton ranks 88th. But if value were to enter college rankings and admissions decisions, academics being the same, Binghamton would have to be considered the “better” school.

Under governor Andrew Cuomo, the State of New York is trying to expand upon the educational and research capabilities of each SUNY university center to anchor a “center of excellence” to spur the economic development of their region. For Binghamton, this will mean stronger alli-

ances with SUNY’s Upstate Medical Center, located about an hour north in Syracuse as well as tighter ties to the local health care institutions in the Binghamton metropolitan area. The University plans to launch its six-year doctoral program in Pharmacy--students go into the program during their freshman year--in 2017. This will make Binghamton the second university center in the SUNY system--the University at Buffalo is the first--to grant that degree. The university is also launching a master’s program for liberal arts undergraduates who are interested in gaining more employable skills as well as taking on two experiential opportunities: a paid internship in business, government or the non-profit sector as well as a capstone project around their own research and professional interests.

Notable Binghamton alumni include Jersey City (NJ) mayor Steve Fulop, singer Ingrid Michaelson, actor Billy Baldwin, actor Paul Reiser, actor Stephanie Courtney (“Flo” in Progressive Insurance commercials) and screenwriter Mark Lawrence, among many others.

Competition

2

What does it take to get in?
Who decides to go?
What other schools do
applicants consider?

Competition

Whether you're from New York or elsewhere it's not easy to get into Binghamton. Only 42 percent of the students who applied to be in the class that entered in 2013 were offered admission. Approximately 2,500 applicants were wait listed; only eight percent were later offered admission. Just over a fifth of the students who were accepted chose to come; they made up a freshman class of just over 2,600 students.

Of the class that entered in 2013, 69 percent scored over 600 (out of 800) on the Critical Reading section of the SAT, while 86 percent scored 600 or higher on the Math section of the test. The middle 50 percent of the SAT range was between 1200 and 1390 with a mean of 1300. Good test scores definitely help a student gain admission to Binghamton, along with a stellar high school transcript. The average unweighted GPA of the entering class was 3.6.

Binghamton is cross-shopped versus other flagship state universities in the Mid-Atlantic states such as the University of Delaware, Penn State and Rutgers-New Brunswick. It is considered the first-choice school among students who are interested in SUNY's university centers (Albany, Binghamton, Buffalo and Stony Brook) and, as a result has the highest test scores among students who choose one of these schools. The Stony Brook campus is actually more selective, perhaps due to its greater emphasis on the health sciences, including programs run in conjunction with the medical school on campus as well as the Brookhaven National Laboratories. Yet the Binghamton students are far more successful at completing a degree.

Binghamton is also cross-shopped against Cornell, Rochester and Syracuse in upstate New York as well as urban schools such as Boston University, Northeastern University and NYU. A head-to-head comparison on College Results Online shows that Binghamton is demographically similar to Syracuse, which is by far the most costly school, while the graduation rates are nearly the same.

Costs

3

Tuition and Fees
Scholarships
Debt

Costs

Binghamton is one of the best values in higher education. This year in-state students pay approximately \$8,600 in tuition and fees; non-residents pay approximately \$20,200. In addition, unlike larger schools such as Penn State or Rutgers, Binghamton does not charge additional tuition for students in pre-professional degree programs such as business, engineering or nursing. The out-of-state charges are quite competitive with *in-state* charges at schools such as Penn State, Pitt, Rutgers, the University of Massachusetts, University of Michigan, University of New Hampshire, University of Rhode Island and the University of Vermont.

Binghamton's current tuition and fee increases represented a six percent increase for New York residents; the previous year costs were a seven percent increase. Out-of-state charges rose by ten percent for each of the past two years. While Binghamton charges significantly less than other public universities, the increases have been significantly higher. Penn State and Rutgers, for example, have held their increases to between three and 4.5 percent according to *College Navigator*, the search site managed by the U.S. Department of Education.

On-campus housing for freshmen is organized around residential colleges, a living arrangement which provides more services as well as responsibilities for students. This living arrangement is also more expensive. A double room in Hinman, one of the older residential colleges, costs just under \$8,500 while a double room in Newing or Dickinson, the newer halls, costs \$1,000 more. The default dining plan costs approximately \$4,600, though more expensive options are available as well.

Since Binghamton starts at a lower price point for tuition and fees, scholarships are more likely to come from the State of New York than the University itself. The University own Web site admits as much:

Binghamton University is fairly "young," having been in existence only since 1946, and therefore our scholarship base is competitive and highly selective, just as our student body is. All of our incoming students are "top of their class" during high school; unfortunately, limited available scholarship dollars requires us to give priority to students who also demonstrate financial need.

However, Binghamton does offer a number of merit-based scholarships for continuing students, including awards from individual schools within the University. Students need to complete only the FAFSA to be considered for need-based financial aid.

Binghamton graduates in the class of 2012 who needed to take out student loans borrowed, on average, approximately \$23,700, according to the Project on Student Debt, quite reasonable for any college or university, public or private. Nearly half of the class (47 percent) graduated with no student loan debt at all while only 16 percent had to borrow from a source other than the Federal Government. However, it is also necessary to mention that Binghamton students borrowed more, according to the Project on Student Debt, than 2012 graduates of the other SUNY university centers (Albany, Buffalo and Stony Brook) as well as Cornell, which has more resources to fulfill financial need. But a Binghamton borrower borrowed, on average, approximately \$10,000 less than a Syracuse borrower in order to complete their degree.

Binghamton parents who needed to rely on the Federal Parent PLUS loan program borrowed, on average, approximately \$10,800 in 2011.

While parent borrowers at Cornell (approximately \$19,600) and Syracuse (approximately \$19,300) borrowed significantly more on average than Binghamton borrowers, parent borrowers at the other SUNY centers borrowed, on average, less than \$10,000 during the same year.

Binghamton is therefore more expensive than the other SUNY university centers, though a fine "least-cost" option versus the larger private universities such as Cornell or Syracuse. The other university centers enjoy some cost advantages due to history (Albany and Buffalo are much older schools) or prior academic/funding decisions (Stony Brook in the mathematical and scientific subjects). The attraction for Binghamton is not only the academics, but also the strengths of the student body. Yet the student who would rank in the middle of the admit pool at Binghamton might also qualify for some merit-based aid from Albany or Buffalo. A small award might not sway the decision away from Binghamton, but a larger award, combined with admission to an Honors College, might do it.

Binghamton's greater value might be for out-of-state students, especially those who might want to move on to New York City for employment after graduation. They have the opportunity to attend a diverse research university with a top-flight academic performance for less than half the tuition and fees of most private universities as well as the connections to the Big Apple. Only an exceptionally well-endowed school like Cornell could discount down to Binghamton's charges.

Comforts

On-Campus Housing
Local Housing Market

4

Comforts

Binghamton has been listed as a “Public Ivy” by several education writers for academics and the high GPA/test cores posted by incoming freshmen. However, the University is also similar to the Ivy League in its approach to undergraduate residence life. Instead of being assigned to residence halls freshmen are assigned to residential colleges, as they would be if they entered Cornell, Harvard, Princeton or Yale. And like the Ivies and other schools that have residential colleges, the halls are mixed with freshmen and upper-class students. Binghamton is going through a cycle of renovations to residential college buildings. The newest halls, Dickinson and Newing were completed two years ago. The others are being renovated at the rate of one building per year.

Depending on the college, the living arrangements are either corridor-style (several rooms sharing a common lounge and bathroom) or suite-style (two to four rooms sharing a common lounge and bathroom). In Binghamton’s case, these are all co-ed, either by alternating room or alternating suite. Laundry is covered in the room charges--no need to carry change--and all residence halls are Wi-Fi enabled. Each hall also has its own computing area. In addition, students who come from long distances or compete in varsity sports have the option of living in halls designated for “break” living during semester breaks.

Residential colleges have other characteristics that separate them from residence halls. They have their own student governments and faculty advisors who create and direct programs. Students also represent their college to the University’s student government. They also have their own unique facilities including dining rooms, classrooms and meeting rooms. Binghamton also assigns specific living-learning communities to residen-

tial colleges. Chemical-free, quiet living and gender-inclusive living options are also available.

Probably the most important distinction, hoped by residence life staff, is that students will remain a part of their residential college beyond their freshman year to serve as leaders and mentors to future students and to bond the residential college community. This is more difficult at Binghamton than it is at a school such as Princeton or Yale because the University offers some attractive options for apartment living for upper-class students while the local rental market is quite inexpensive for a Northeastern metropolitan area. It is quite possible for students to share a house or apartment near campus for around \$400/person/month, including utilities, although some landlords will obligate them to 12-month leases. Another downside is that off-campus residences are not within walking distance of the entrance to campus. The University offers free bus transportation to students and continually redesigns the bus routes around student off-campus living patterns. However, it does add time to the journey to classes and the return trip home.

Binghamton has 52 fraternities and sororities, that involve approximately 1,500 students. Some have housing, though not within the boundaries of the University's campus. Therefore, the school does not have a "fraternity row." Binghamton allows students to rush after they have completed at least 12 credits on campus with a minimum GPA of 2.5. In addition to chapters assessing their own fees, the University assesses a \$25/student/semester programming fee. The University has [warned parents](#) and students about [unrecognized organizations](#) marketing themselves as fraternities or sororities as well as [recognized houses that have been placed on sanctions or are in good standing](#).

Binghamton takes unique approaches to pricing meal plans. While other schools require first-year students to take one of the more expensive unlimited or meals-per-week or per-semester plans, [Binghamton allows all resident students, including freshmen, to sign up for one of six plans](#). Plans are priced with a combination of a "membership fee" of just under \$1,400/semester, which is the same for all plans, plus "dining dollars" to purchase each meal at a dining hall, cafe or "grab and go" location at a discounted price.

The living options on campus may be more expensive but they are also more convenient for most undergraduates given the layout of the campus. Unlike schools such as Delaware, Penn State or Rutgers-New Brunswick, Binghamton's campus does not open into a "college town" setting; a left turn sends drivers onto Vestal Parkway, a suburban retail-oriented highway. It's easier to live on campus and leave the car parked than it is to fend for yourself before class to find a space or rely on a bus. The University's dining services appear to realize this; there are [commuter meal plan options](#) as well as those for residents. An added benefit: A Shoppers Special service from campus takes students to Wegmans as well as two local malls. As a result, a car is not really necessary at Binghamton if you live on campus, unless you have to do a large shopping spree at the supermarket. Freshmen are not allowed to have cars anyway. But the school participates in an hour rental program with Hertz where all students may rent a car by the hour.

Community

5

Campus
Environs
School Spirit

Community

Being only a half-century old, the Binghamton campus does not have an “Old Main” or similar landmark historic building. As one contrast, most colleges feature a tall clock tower as a fixture in their marketing materials. Binghamton does too, only the tower, atop the Union, is one of the newer structures on campus. This tower is also used in some versions of university’s logo.

Driving around, one might consider the campus quite attractive, considering it has been formed from little history. The Binghamton campus is settled into a hill. Residential buildings are situated above academic buildings. Residential areas, as a result are in a tree-laden setting, through the academic buildings are not. The image for a student is much like walking from an apartment complex to a modern office park. [The major traffic circle, as seen from a map or aerial view, is shaped like the side profile of a human brain](#). It can also be thought to resemble butterfly wings when you add the routes around the Hinman and Mountainview residential college communities. Curvy roads not only enhance the feeling of a hilltop campus, they also help to slow cars down. There is also a 190-acre nature preserve on campus, of which 20 acres are wetlands. The preserve has numerous educational and recreational uses, including hiking trails and a wooden foot-bridge. Its habitats include hemlock forest, oak woodlands, a beaver pond, streams, wetlands, shrub-land, meadows and lichen-covered sites. There’s also crossing for salamanders.

With the completion of the new residential college buildings, the Engineering and Science Center, the \$27 million Events Center, the University Union and several sleek glass classroom and academic office buildings, there are several ongoing efforts to create a strong visual identity and energy sustainability—aka “a green campus.” The recently redesigned University Union includes a Food Marketplace with [11 dining venues](#), as well as Cafe Tillman, a “grab and go” for coffee, snack and sandwiches. The Career Development Center was relocated into the Union as was the Center for Civic Engagement

Like most colleges and universities, the most-reported campus crimes at Binghamton are alcohol or drug-related. However, the number of reported incidents were fairly low for school that has approximately 7,400 undergraduates living on a contiguous campus. In 2013, there were actually *no reported arrests* for alcohol-related violations on campus according to the [University's Clery Report](#). However, the number of reported alcohol-related disciplinary referrals rose from 168 in 2011 to 253 in 2013. The number of reported drug-related arrests dropped from 81 to 2012 to 34 in 2013. However, the number of reported disciplinary actions rose from 116 to 176. Aside from drug and alcohol-related incidents, burglaries were the most-reported crime, although there were no more than 16 reported on campus from 2011 through 2013. Also crimes related to sexual violations, forcible and non-forcible, dropped to seven to two. However, there were two reported arrests for weapons possession on campus during 2013 as well as five reported incidents of vandalism related to hate crimes. The campus design probably helps law enforcement; the curved road network and secured entrances make it easier for police to patrol. Just as students do not need to travel far to get around, neither do the campus police.

In addition to the programs offered in the residential colleges, there are over 250 student clubs and organizations on campus. Over 300 students represent the school to visitors as tour guides or student ambassadors, a very strong display of loyalty. Students also run a bus service that provides travel home to Long Island, New Jersey and New York City for the holidays as well as reduced prices for Greyhound service to other destinations. Binghamton has been named to the President's Honor Roll for Community Service each year since the Honor Roll's inception in 2008. The University was named to the Honor Roll with Distinction in 2009.

Binghamton competes at the highest level in 21 varsity sports. Since joining the America East, Binghamton's baseball program has the best winning percentage of any team and most players who have signed a professional contract. In addition, the Men's Tennis Team won eight of the last ten conference titles, though the conference has dropped the sport as of 2014-15. But unlike the other SUNY uni-

versity centers and neighbors Cornell and Syracuse, Binghamton does not play football, and the University is in no hurry to add the sport.

While Binghamton is likened to "Rust Belt" communities that have lost industry and jobs, it also has many amenities one might find in a larger college community such as antique stores, a botanical garden, a performing arts center, a zoo and minor league baseball and hockey. The New York Mets Double A team plays here as does the American Hockey League affiliate of the Ottawa Senators. Binghamton is also the home of Twilight Zone star Rod Serling and is considered to be the "Carousel Capital of the World," with 6 historic wooden carousels within city limits.

The Binghamton area is noted for very rough weather most of the year, including high rainfall and snow. Binghamton is located at the confluence of two rivers, the Susquehanna and the Chenango, and flooding is not an uncommon occurrence. When reading student reviews on sites such as *Campus Discovery*, *College Prowler*, *Students Review* and *Unigo*, the rain and dreary skies quite often appear as a negative as does the rundown appearance of the downtown business district. However, the University is becoming a more active partner in resolving the economic development issues. Students, faculty and staff were exceptionally active in aiding the community in 2011 when the campus and downtown area actually flooded. Students are invited to receive emergency response training through the Broome County Community Emergency Response Team beginning in the sophomore year.

Binghamton might not have the setting of a "football school," but that not likely to be the experience that its students were seeking when they chose to come. Further, a student who was in the middle of the admit pool here would likely be in the upper quarter of the Syracuse admit pool, and possibly qualify for merit-based aid. Those who want to mix spectator sports with their academics who can make up the difference in cost might be happier there.

Curriculum

6

Academics

Honors Programs

Experiential Learning

Curriculum

Aside from foreign language study, which depends on the student's academic program, Binghamton's General Education Requirements include:

- English Composition: 4 credits
- Oral Communication: 1 to 4 credits (there are joint Composition and Communications courses)
- Pluralism (Multi-Cultural interaction) in the U.S.: 4 credits
- Global Interdependencies: 4 credits
- Laboratory Science: 4 to 6 credits (depends on the major)
- Social Science: 4 credits
- Mathematics/Reasoning: 4 credits
- Aesthetics (Visual and Performing Arts): 4 credits
- Humanities: 4 credits
- Physical Activity and Wellness: 2 credits

Unlike other mid-size or large research universities Binghamton does not have a freshman seminar class during the first and/or second semester. In addition, students are likely to be in some big classes during the first two years, possibly longer depending on the major. Fourteen percent of Binghamton's courses in 2012-13 had more 50 students according to the University's [most recent Common Data Set](#). However, Binghamton recently introduced a Freshman Research Immersion Program, first as a pilot with 30 students; it will expand to 250 participants for 2014-15. This number represents close to 10 percent of the students in the incoming class.

The University also makes it a point to inform students that they can place out of several of these courses by virtue of advanced placement or appropriate scores on the New York State Regents examinations. Students are not required to substitute another course in that subject area if they have attained advanced standing, although the academic department has the final say on granting credit. The opportunity to place out of as many as a semester's worth of credits makes Binghamton a more attractive option for an extremely well-prepared student who might have otherwise attended an Ivy League school or other private college. The University has also implemented programs that improved academic advising, especially for the "gatekeeper courses," the introductory classes in the more popular majors. It has also introduced applied introductory coursework in Engineering through a [Freshman Engineering Design Program](#) that integrates engineering fundamentals and engineering communications in a year-long program that includes two hands-on engineering projects in the fall semester in the required Introduction to Engineering Design and Engineering Communications I courses, and a semester long Global Issues project in Introduction to Engineering Analysis and Engineering Communications II in the spring semester.

Binghamton does not have community service or "discovery" requirements where students must do an internship, research project or study abroad. However, the University offers tremendous opportunities for students to pursue any of these activities. Binghamton's [Center for Civic Engagement](#), for example, sponsors an annual Showcase of Community Opportunities which draws more than 75 local nonprofit and community organizations, student and faculty groups that may present various internships (credit or non-credit), research projects (can be credit-bearing) and volunteer service opportunities on and off campus. In recent years the

number of internship opportunities offered through the Center has risen by more than 25 percent.

Two academic scholarship programs are exceptionally worthwhile. The Binghamton University Scholars Program operates much like an honor's program within Harpur College, the university's school of arts and science. Benefits in the Scholars program include group housing in Newing Hall, honors and leadership courses, an experiential learning course and a capstone project. Students must maintain a GPA of 3.25 or better to remain in the program. The President's Scholars program is open to more students than the University Scholars program. Each President's Scholar is assigned faculty or staff mentors and is offered the opportunity to register for small section classes as well as lectures.

Accounting majors benefit further from one of the few academic programs sponsored by an internationally recognized employer. The PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC) Scholars program has several benefits including:

- Special advising and mentoring by PwC Scholars Program advisor.
- Honors certificate issued by PwC and the School of Management.
- Annual week-long international experience – Past cities have included Hong Kong, Paris, London and Dublin. Accompanied by a PwC recruiter, students spend time at PwC headquarters in various cities abroad, absorb the culture and learn business practices at the hosting PwC office.
- Dinners and events, such as basketball games, with PwC staff and partners.

-
- Special writing and presentation courses to enhance written and oral communication skills needed to succeed in the business world.
 - Guaranteed freshmen first-choice housing preference and early course registration within your class.
 - Community service – Students give back to their community while learning how to manage large projects. Past projects include planting bushes and flowers, building a community garden and restoring a park in the city of Binghamton. Students work alongside partners from PwC.
 - Networking opportunities within the program with program alumni and others.

No New York private college, even one that offers similar majors—Syracuse, for example, also has strong Accounting, Engineering and Nursing programs, and so does NYU—offers a program with benefits as extensive as these. In addition, Binghamton's School of Management is ranked 23rd among public undergraduate business schools and 54th nationwide, according the most recent rankings in *Bloomberg BusinessWeek*.

Binghamton students gave their faculty a rating of 3.80 (out of a possible 5.0) on RateMyProfessors.com, a little higher than Cornell students (3.77), Rochester students (3.70) and Syracuse students (3.68) rated their faculty. Binghamton students also held their faculty in higher regard than students at Boston University (3.7), Northeastern University (3.57), Delaware (3.73), Penn State (3.71) and Rutgers-New Brunswick (3.74). Binghamton faculty were also held in higher regard than faculty at the

other SUNY university centers in Albany (3.66), Buffalo (3.72) or Stony Brook (3.73).

Like neighbors Cornell and Syracuse, Binghamton is not as large and intimidating as much bigger flagship schools such as Penn State or Rutgers-New Brunswick. But the academic options for undergraduates, where majors are similar, are no less extensive, and the faculty no less capable.

Connections

Alumni Relations
Career Services

Connections

Binghamton relocated and expanded its career development center into the University Union in 2012. The Fleishman Center for Career and Professional Development adopted a “community concept” which engages career services professionals in teams with faculty members, academic advisors, alumni and residence life. The community concept includes not only job search and interview preparation advising, but also an externship program for liberal arts students; sophomores are given priority. In addition to fall and spring career fairs, the Fleishman Center hosts several smaller career nights targeted to students in specific majors or interested in specific employers. In the Spring of 2014, the Center also hosted a Media and Communications Career and Exploration Week that included speakers and workshops. A Science and Health Career Exploration Week was scheduled for the Fall.

The Fleishman Center reported the following for the Class of 2012:

- 67 percent of graduates had obtained a position within their desired pathway by graduation (i.e. either employment or continuing education).
- 42 percent of graduates seeking employment had obtained a position by graduation.
- 95% of graduates seeking to continue their education had obtained a position by graduation.
- 65% of graduates seeking employment had obtained a position between graduation and 8 months after graduation.
- 79% of graduates seeking continuing education or employment had obtained a position within their desired pathway (either employment or

continuing education) between graduation and 8 months after graduation.

Approximately 54,000 Binghamton alumni are registered in LinkedIn.com; just over 24,000 live and work in the New York City metropolitan area, while 5,900 live and work in New York State's Southern Tier (Binghamton/Ithaca/Syracuse area). The Washington D.C and Boston metropolitan areas each have more than 1,500 alumni. Approximately 10 percent of Binghamton alumni registered in LinkedIn work in Education, seven percent work in Engineering while six percent work in the health professions. Binghamton also ranks 18th in LinkedIn among U.S. universities for alumni in "highly desired" jobs in Accounting.

Binghamton has approximately 117,000 alumni, making the numbers registered in LinkedIn more impressive and significant. All alumni are members of the University's Alumni Association; no dues are charged. However, there are not many regional chapters in the U.S. considering the size of the alumni base. In addition to chapters in the New York City metropolitan area as well as upstate New York (Albany, Binghamton, Syracuse), there are chapters in Boston, Chicago, New Hampshire, Raleigh, San Francisco and Washington D.C. There are also commitments to expand the chapter network to Southern California (Los Angeles, Orange County, San Diego)

The University has become more active in engaging younger alumni through [Bearcats of the Last Decade \(BOLD\)](#) as well as in engaging parents. While Binghamton does not have a parent's association, it does have a Parent's Fund administered by parents. Parents also participate in Summer Send Off parties across the country while the University has both a Family Weekend and a Homecoming Weekend.

It helps Binghamton's cause that the University has admitted excellent students and produced a higher percentage of graduates than most flagship state universities. Historically, Binghamton, as well as the other SUNY university centers, have worked with fewer resources and also had fewer incentives to raise funds than other flagship schools. Nor did they do much to attract students from outside New York. More recently, while the State of New York has enabled Binghamton and the other university centers to offer a highly-competitive sticker price, it has asked that the individual schools become more entrepreneurial when it comes to adding services beyond the classroom for students and alumni. The other centers: Albany, Buffalo and Stony Brook expanded their athletic programs, especially football, hoping to engage more alumni as well as elevate their profile for fundraising while providing more scholarships. Binghamton's administration and faculty have been quite successful at thinking entrepreneurially to add resources without taking a similar risk, which is to be admired. Binghamton is also the most successful SUNY center at attracting out-of-state students, likely due to the academic profiles of the freshman classes that came before as well as the smaller size of the school. That will help the University's future in terms of adding to the geographic diversity of the alumni base. Binghamton alumni have enough of a presence in New York City, to provide a strong network for graduates, and that is one of the more desired places for recent graduates to work. But a national university needs a more national alumni base than Binghamton has today.

Conclusions

Summing up



Conclusions

Binghamton is one of the best buys among mid-sized public universities in the U.S. It also attracts one of the brightest student bodies among public colleges and universities for its academics, costs and connections to the New York job market in the Big Apple as well as upstate.

Now, more than ever, Binghamton is often cross-shopped against Cornell, and Cornell comes up wanting based on price and academic programming. The university has taken dramatic steps to improve the quality of life on campus and to become more engaged with its regional business community and alumni base. The newest student-oriented facilities, the Union and the recently-renovated residence halls, are quite impressive for a mid-size or large state university.

Binghamton is an attractive public option for the more serious student who wants to attend a smaller university than schools such as Penn State or Rutgers that have more than twice as many undergraduates. It's also an attractive alternative for anyone considering Syracuse or any of the larger New York or Boston schools such as BU, NYU or Northeastern, all of which have larger undergraduate student bodies and carry higher costs.

The downside is that Binghamton is not as dynamic a college town as Ithaca or the Marshall Street district by Syracuse, let alone Boston or New York. Nor is it the right school for some-

one who is looking for an alma mater that plays basketball or football on national television. Binghamton is also relatively young compared to other flagship universities. Its oldest buildings date back only half a century. Those who want a campus with ivy-covered buildings will not find that here, although they will find a pristine 190-acre nature preserve. In addition, the University, while academically respected, has a thin alumni base beyond New York State..

Bright students who want a demanding academic program and the educational resources of a more expensive private school will get what they want from Binghamton, and they'll get it at a bargain price. Those who succeed will be as competitive as their friends at Cornell.

Ed Quest's Report Card						
Binghamton University						
Four-Year/ Six-Year Grad Rates	Freshman Retention	Costs	Comforts	Community	Curriculum	Connections
A/A	A	A	A	B+	A	A (for New York), B beyond New York
Strengths				Weaknesses		
Bang for the buck, even if you don't come from New York State				Binghamton is not the most attractive of cities, even for Upstate NY, and it's not really a college town		
You can get the same opportunities as someone who pays a lot more to go to the Ivy League university that's an hour away--and you'll meet many students who got into that school!				If you want an Ivy-covered campus with lots of history, look elsewhere		
Residence halls organized like a residential college system--and you don't get burned on the meal plan				If you want a school spirit and sports school look elsewhere; this is a more "academic" place		
Costs of living here are lower than they are in most Northeastern cities				It's more expensive than the other SUNY university centers for the students it attracts		
Very service-oriented student body. much like other America East schools (UAlbany, U of Maryland-Baltimore County, U of Vermont)				The housing on campus is very nice, but it's not cheap		
Between residential colleges and apartments, the University can house more than half of the undergraduates on campus				Alumni base is thin beyond New York State and the NYC metro area		

The End

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