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### SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1851, Santa Clara University (SCU) is the oldest continuously operating college in California. SCU's founding predates the University of California-Berkeley by 13 years. SCU also predates Stanford by 40 years. SCU is also one of 28 Jesuit universities in the United States. The University's founding predates the founding of larger Jesuit schools such as Boston College (1863), Loyola University-Chicago (1870) and Marquette (1881) that are also comprehensive undergraduate and graduate universities in the metropolitan areas they serve. While SCU is not the only Jesuit school in the San Francisco Bay Area—the University of San Francisco is actually larger—it is the only one that serves Silicon Valley, one of the major economic engines for investment and employment in the United States.

With around 5,500 undergraduates as well as more than 3,500 graduate, law and theology students SCU is a mid-sized school. Being in California it attracts students who are considering the state universities. Students who consider Santa Clara also consider Gonzaga University (WA) and Loyola Marymount University (CA) among the Jesuit schools that are located on the West Coast. Both of these schools are of similar size and offer a similar mix of academic programs for undergraduates. Other schools out West that are similar in size and undergraduate academic offerings are Chapman University (CA) and the University of Denver (CO).

SCU attracts extremely bright students according to the University's 2014-15 Common Data Set. The middle 50 percent of the SAT range for students who entered SCU this past fall was between 1210 and 1360 (out of 1600). The middle 50 percent of the ACT Composite range was between 27 and 32. The test scores appear to have some importance. For example, 72 percent of the freshman class scores over 600 (out of 800) on the Critical Reading section of the SAT while 89 percent scored over 600 on the Math section of the test.

The University attracted nearly 15,000 applications for a freshman class with just over 1,300 students, again according to its most recent Common Data Set. Approximately half were accepted. Almost 2,500 applicants were offered a place on the waiting list. More than 1,300 accepted the offer, a positive indication of student interest in the school. Only 71 were eventually offered admission.

SCU offers both Early Action and Early Decision options. Both have a deadline of November 1st. Only nine percent of the most recent freshman class was admitted through Early Decision. This indicates that SCU is not usually the first choice for most applicants or that the school is not known to be generous when it comes to scholarships. Given the location of the school as well as the quality of the applicant pool, as well as the yield rate (about 20 percent), it is fair to presume that cost is one reason why students choose *not* to attend SCU.

However, SCU students appear to be relatively satisfied with their education. Ninety-six percent of the freshmen who entered in 2013 returned for their sophomore year, an outstanding performance, equal to Georgetown, the oldest and most publicized Jesuit



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university and slightly superior to Boston College (95 percent), both of which have more selective admissions. Seventy-seven percent of the class that entered in 2009 graduated within four years, according to *College Results Online*, a database managed by the Education Trust, a non-partisan, non-profit education policy organization based in Washington D.C and Oakland, California, an excellent performance by the admissions team as well as the students.

The majority of SCU students come from California, according to the school's 2014-15 Common Data Set. Residents of the Golden State made up 58 percent of the incoming freshman class as well as 74 percent of the undergraduate student body. By contrast, other Jesuit universities such as Boston College, Fordham, Loyola University-Maryland and Saint Joseph's University (PA) have evolved from regional commuter schools into universities with more national student bodies. All of these schools draw the majority of their undergraduates from outside their home state.

### Costs

This past year SCU charged approximately \$44,000 for tuition and fees and just under \$13,000 for room and board. The tuition and fees were high for a privately-supported school. The room and board charges were reasonable considering the University's location. Tuition and fees increased by four percent from the previous academic year; room and board costs rose by three percent.

Excluding athletes, approximately 30 percent of the most recent freshmen class received merit scholarships that averaged just under \$13,000 or less than a third of tuition and fees, according to the SCU's 2014-15 Common Data Set. On average, the University met 81 percent of the financial need for incoming freshmen; for the full undergraduate student body it was just under 72 percent. The very best students in a class can be selected as [Johnson Scholars](#), and received a totally full ride (tuition and fees, room and board) for four years as well as many other academic benefits. SCU is also a great school for a smart athlete. The University competes in NCAA Division 1 (scholarship level) in 19 varsity sports.

SCU practices "need-blind" admissions in selecting 90 percent of the class, according to the University's admissions office. However, according to the Project on Student Debt, over half of the class of 2013 (54 percent) graduated from SCU with no student loan debt at all. This suggests that SCU has strong appeal to students who come from families that can afford to pay for their education. Of the students who graduated in 2013 who had to borrow, the average borrower took on a debt of slightly more than \$29,000. Thirty percent of the class borrowed from a source other than the Federal Government. Fortunately, for in-state students, the state of California allows state scholarship awards to be applied to tuition and fees at SCU as well as other private colleges in the state.

SCU had an endowment of approximately \$875 million in fiscal year 2014, according to the National Association of College and University Business Officers, larger than schools such as the University of Miami and the College of William and Mary, as well as Fordham and Loyola University-Chicago among the Jesuit schools. All of these schools enroll more undergraduates and have more of a research focus than SCU. This does



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open a question of whether SCU could become more generous in awarding scholarship assistance.

### Curriculum

Unlike the other Jesuit schools such as Boston College, Fordham and Georgetown, SCU operates on a quarter system instead of semesters. As a result the school year runs from September through June; schools on a semester system begin in late August/early September and end in late April/early May. It is not uncommon for California schools to run on a quarter system. All of the University of California system schools do, excluding Berkeley and Merced, as does Stanford. Perhaps the best reasons for SCU to continue to work on a quarter system are to better accommodate transfer students from community colleges as well as other California schools and to compete with schools on the same academic schedule in varsity sports.

SCU students will take four courses per quarter, versus five or six at a semester-schedule school. They also have the opportunity to take at least 12 classes, maybe as many as 15, over the course of a school year, versus 10 to 12 for most academic programs at a semester school. However, it is not uncommon to have 16 weeks of work in a semester-long course in a rigorous major crammed into 10 weeks in a quarter.

SCU asks applicants to choose a school: Arts and Sciences, Business or Engineering, when they apply, though they do not need to declare a major. Unlike larger public universities, SCU will admit all students who qualify for admission to a major into the major. However, those who have an inkling of interest in business or engineering should begin their education there. Transfer from a liberal arts program into these pre-professional programs can be quite difficult.

SCU's degree requirements, outside those for the student's chosen college and major, include three courses in religion. However, although SCU is a Jesuit school, these courses do not need to be in Catholicism or Christianity. The requirement is quite common among Jesuit schools, and it helps those who have or seek a strong religious identity. Those who would prefer to invest those credits in other coursework should consider another school. Unlike other liberal arts subjects such as Math, the sciences, foreign languages and introductory humanities or social studies, it is not possible to place out of them.

SCU offers eight undergraduate engineering majors, impressive for a school of its size, including a unique program in Web Design and Engineering. Also, unlike other engineering schools, the University offers the opportunity to pursue minors in Bioengineering, Computer Science and Engineering, Electrical Engineering and Mechanical Engineering. It is also possible to earn a Bachelors and a Masters degree in Civil Engineering, Computer Science and Engineering, Computer Engineering, Electrical Engineering or Mechanical Engineering within five years. Engineering students are given the option to choose cooperative education (full-time employment during given quarters over the school year) or internships (full-time employment during the summer, possibly part-time employment during the school year). In addition, engineering students



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participate in study abroad programs at higher rates than their peers at much larger universities.

SCU offers the standard set of business programs (Accounting, Economics, Finance, Management and Marketing) as well as the opportunity to combine Information Systems with education in Accounting or Production and Operations Management. Students enrolled inside and outside of the business school can minor in Economics, Entrepreneurship, International Business, Management Information Systems or Retail Studies. Both the undergraduate business and accounting programs are accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business. The business school offers an [Accelerated Cooperative Education Program](#) that combines career development, leadership development, service learning and an employment opportunity that is full time during the summer after the junior year, but can continue part-time into the senior year. Interestingly, SCU is located in a region where the prestige university, Stanford, does not grant undergraduate business degrees. This helps SCU students to be more competitive candidates for internships in Silicon Valley's finance community, among other enterprises.

The College of Arts and Sciences offers some unique majors including Ancient Studies *and* Classical Studies, Latin Language and Culture *and* Latin and Greek, Environmental Studies *and* Environmental Sciences as well as Public Health Science. Unique minors include Biotechnology, Creative Writing, Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Musical Theater and Urban Education.

Students whose ambitions extend into research or further education might want to consider SCU's [Honors Program](#). While the University does not assign honors students to a specific residence hall—the halls host eight learning communities for all first-year students—it does give them access to tutorials, small “honors-only” Difficult Dialogues courses as well as opportunities to apply for funded summer research and write a Senior Thesis.

Aside from the academic programs, another good reason to consider SCU is smaller class sizes relative to the larger research universities in California and elsewhere. Only four percent of all classes at SCU (typically Psychology) have more than 60 students. Introductory classes in Chemistry have no more than 45 students, first-year Calculus class have no more than 40 while the introductory Economics classes have no more than 25. The average class size at SCU is 23 students. The smaller classes make it easier to keep up with the faster pace of a quarter versus a semester.

SCU students gave their faculty a rating of 3.63 (out of a possible 5) on [RateMyProfessors.com](#), about equal to the rating Gonzaga students gave theirs. This was lower than students at Loyola Marymount, the University of San Francisco and the University of San Diego, among the California Jesuit schools, rated their faculty. It was also lower than students at the University of California system schools rated theirs. This was interesting because the faculty at the larger schools are supposedly less accessible and less approachable. Students at Boston College and Fordham also held their faculty in higher regard than SCU students held theirs.



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### Community

Following the design of the original Mission building on campus, SCU's architecture, old and new, follows a Spanish motif. The campus is immaculate. Students need to cross streets only to get to off-campus housing or to attend athletic events.

Aside from concerns about Forcible Sex Offenses—there were seven reported in 2013 versus only one during the previous two year—the campus is relatively safe, according to [the University's 2014 Clery Report](#). However, the numbers of reported incidents of drug and alcohol-related Disciplinary Referrals are high for a school of this size where most of the students of legal drinking age do not live on campus. In 2013 there were over 600 reported alcohol-related disciplinary referrals in the residence halls as well as more than 100 drug-related referrals.

Part of the problem is the lack of places to go near campus. The University is located in a residential neighborhood as opposed to schools such as Berkeley, Stanford and Fordham that have off-campus student-oriented shopping and dining options within easy walking distance. While Jesuit schools, including SCU, do not recognize fraternities as student organizations—the school reports the percentage of undergraduate students in fraternities and sororities as zero on its 2014-15 Common Data Set—there are unrecognized Greek organizations that occupy private residences off campus. The actions of the membership, when they relate to law enforcement, are subject to the jurisdiction of the City of Santa Clara, and not the University. About a fifth of the undergraduate student body belongs to these organizations.

SCU is located in Santa Clara, a city of just over 116,000 people, within the heart of Silicon Valley. The city is served by CalTrain (an \$18 round-trip fare into San Francisco) and Amtrak trains and is close to San Jose (by free shuttle bus service), the tenth most populous city in the U.S. Within California San Jose actually has a larger population than San Francisco although it does not have the cultural cache' of the city by the Bay. San Jose also has a larger population than cities such as Boston, Seattle or Denver.

Aside from the University campus, the major attraction in Santa Clara is Levi's Stadium, home to the NFL's San Francisco 49ers. [Interestingly, the NFL team was founded by Tony Morabito, a SCU alumni, who chose the university's colors \(red and gold\) for their uniforms. Morabito's first coach, Buck Shaw, had been the head coach at SCU.](#) The school's former football stadium, now used for lacrosse and soccer, is named for him. While Shaw had success as the 49ers coach, he is best known in professional football circles as the man who led the Philadelphia Eagles to their last title in 1960.

SCU has not played football since 1992 but the school has a strong sports history. In addition to Coach Shaw, the University produced Dan Pastorini, the third pick in the 1971 NFL Draft. Pastorini went on to play 12 seasons in the NFL for four teams, leading the Houston Oilers (now Tennessee Titans) to conference championship games in 1978 and 1979. SCU's most recognizable alumni athletes to a younger audience are NBA star Steve Nash and women's soccer Olympian Brandi Chastain. National champions in 2001, the women's soccer team earned repeated mentions in the movie *Bend It Like*



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Beckham. With 22 appearances in NCAA Tournament play, this is SCU's most successful varsity athletic team. The men's baseball, basketball and soccer programs have also been successful as has the women's volleyball team.

### Comforts

Ninety-five percent of SCU freshmen live on campus, as do 85 percent of the sophomores. Freshmen are assigned to one of eight residence halls by [the learning community they choose](#). Two seminar courses, Culture and Ideas and Critical Thinking, are taught in residence halls. All of the halls mix freshmen and sophomores. Only two, DaVinci and Sobrato, provide apartment or suite-style living options for juniors and seniors. Four halls, including DaVinci and Sobrato, are air conditioned. Laundry is included with the room charge. Swig Hall, the tallest residence hall with 11 floors, is noted as the "party hall" on college review sites because it houses the most freshmen and sophomores by far. No other hall has more than five floors.

All students who live in the halls must purchase a "dollar-a-point" meal plan with either 1300 or 1500 points. Sixty points can be rolled over between continuous quarters, fall to winter or winter to spring.

Off-campus rental charges are extremely high; [they can easily go over \\$1,000 per month for an apartment or shared home near campus](#). The university housing is a much better value. SCU allows all students, excluding freshmen (who can request permission), to have cars. But the cost of the commute by car might not offset a lower rent available by living further from campus.

### Connections

Notable SCU alumni include Leon Panetta, former U.S. Secretary of Defense and former director of the CIA (among other elected and appointed positions); Janet Napolitano, president of the University of California system and former U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security (among other elected and appointed positions); NBA basketball star and two-time MVP Steve Nash; Dee Dee Myers former White House press secretary under President Bill Clinton; author Khalid Hosseini and current California governor Edmund "Jerry" Brown, among many others. SCU has 27 alumni clubs across the country, with 15 in California and 2 in Washington State (Seattle and Spokane).

As of the start of the current academic year SCU had approximately 91,500 living alumni, according to admissions literature, of which nearly 53,000 held undergraduate degrees. About 43,000 alumni reside in the San Francisco Bay Area. Among the more than 52,000 SCU alumni registered on [LinkedIn.com](#), Cisco Systems employs more than any other firm, followed by Apple, Oracle, Hewlett Packard and Google. Interestingly, although the College of Arts and Sciences enrolls 60 percent of the undergraduates at SCU, the majority of the alumni registered in LinkedIn has previously studied a subject in business or engineering.

[SCU released its statistics for the Class of 2014](#). Eighty-two percent of the class had either found full-time employment or service assignments or had decided to continue



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their education full time. [The University's Career Center advertises that 71 percent of the seniors who found graduated and found work in 2014 had used their services.](#)

## **Conclusions**

SCU is an excellent school that takes excellent advantage of its location. A student who wants to find work in the business or the technology community within San Francisco or Silicon Valley can get what s/he wants, if s/he does the work.

The relationship between SCU and the Silicon Valley business community is very much like the relationship that Fordham has in New York City and Boston College has in the Boston area. The alumni base within the region is impressive for a mid-sized school. Not to mention that it is very difficult to pass up the opportunity to be a Johnson Scholar, unless you receive a similar offer from Stanford.

If you can qualify to be a scholarship athlete or a Johnson Scholar or your family has the means to cover the costs, SCU can be a rewarding and life enriching experience. But costs (tuition and fees and housing) are the major downside for almost half of the students who decide to come, as well as those who apply but take a pass.

## **ED QUEST'S REPORT CARD**

### **Santa Clara University**

4-Year/6-Year Graduation Rates: A

Freshman Retention: A

Costs: C

Comforts: B+

Community: B+

Curriculum: A

Connections: A