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Seton Hall University

Founded in 1856 in South Orange, New Jersey, Seton Hall is a comprehensive research university with approximately 5,800 undergraduates. Undergraduate education is offered through [eight separate schools](#). In terms of academic offerings as well as the size of undergraduate student body, Seton Hall is most similar to Georgetown University. However, its students are far more local; just over 70 percent of them come from New Jersey.

Seton Hall is a Catholic university, one of the oldest Diocesan universities in the United States, under the auspices of the Archdiocese of Newark. It is named for Elizabeth Seton, the first female American saint. The school is cross-shopped not only against Georgetown, the oldest Jesuit university in the U.S., but other religiously-affiliated schools such as Fordham, St. John's, Boston College and Sacred Heart (CT). Among secular competitors, NYU is the school considered most often by students who apply to Seton Hall.

However, given the high percentage of students from New Jersey, the school considered most often is Rutgers' main campus in New Brunswick. Like Rutgers, Seton Hall is just a train ride away from New York City, only Seton Hall is closer. However, trains leave South Orange less frequently than they do from New Brunswick. The location is still a major attraction for students who are interested in working in New York City while they complete their degrees, building valuable work experience. Seton Hall students have the opportunity to build resumes that are as impressive as those of students from Fordham or NYU, if they find their academic direction quickly.

Across all majors Seton Hall is less selective than most of its competition. The university accepted approximately 75 percent of the students who applied to join the freshman class in 2014; only 13 percent, about 1,400 students, decided to come. Approximately half of the class is Catholic, though most attended public schools. The SAT range for the middle 50 percent of the class was between 1040 and 1250; the range for the ACT Composite was between 23 and 27. Eighty-five percent of the class returned for their sophomore year. The four-year graduation rate for the class that entered in 2008 was 56 percent, slightly below Rutgers as well as all of the other most-considered private schools.

New Jersey and New York high school students who are curious about what Seton Hall has to offer in the way of rigor should check to see if their high school participates in [Project Acceleration](#) with the university. Seton Hall has approved advanced courses in 24 subjects delivered at 175 high schools for college credit at a bargain price of \$75 a credit. Students may earn up to 22 credits towards a degree not only from Seton Hall, but also other colleges and universities. Over 3,000 students take these courses each year.

Costs

Seton Hall charged approximately \$37,700 in tuition and fees for 2015-16, including a laptop computer that is issued at the beginning of the freshman year, then upgraded in the junior year. Room and board averages around \$14,000, on the higher end for most colleges and universities. However, these direct charges are lower than those assessed by schools such as Boston



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College, Fordham, Georgetown, NYU, Saint Joseph's and Villanova. The base tuition and fees also also lower than schools such as the University of Vermont and Michigan State University charge non-residents.

Seton Hall is quite aggressive at recruiting, not only by offering targeted academic programs and scholarships, but also by offering a \$22,500 tuition reduction for applicants who rank in the upper tenth of their class and score 1250 or higher (out of 1600), with no score below 550 (Critical Reading or Math) on the SAT or 28 or higher on the ACT. This is called the Public Tuition Rate. The tuition reduction brought this year's tuition and fees down from approximately \$37,700 to just over \$15,000, slightly less than New Jersey residents would pay to attend Rutgers and less than residents of Illinois, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania and Vermont would pay to attend their flagship state schools. The university offers other scholarships as well. It is fair to say that a New Jersey resident who ranks in the upper quarter of the applicant pool would need to score over over 1300 on the SAT to get a better deal from Rutgers and other state colleges. However, those who take the offer have to maintain a 3.0 or higher to keep it. Those who are serious must complete their application to Seton Hall by December 1st, around the same time that Rutgers renders its initial admission decisions. Partly as a result of offering the Public Tuition Rate, 60 percent of Seton Hall's incoming freshman class entered through Early Action admissions.

The university did not report financial aid statistics to the College Board or post a Common Data Set. Nor did it report average student loan indebtedness to the Project on Student Debt. It did, however, report to the Project that 31 percent of the students who earned their degrees in 2014 qualified for the Federal Pell Grant. Usually this means that the New Jersey resident students also qualified for the Tuition Aid Grant from the State of New Jersey which can be over \$9,000 a year.

Curriculum

Seton Hall has eight undergraduate schools: Arts and Sciences, Business, Communication and the Arts, Seminary, Diplomacy and International Relations, Nursing, Education and Human Services and Health and Medical Sciences.

It is possible to enter undecided but it can be quite difficult to transfer from the College of Arts and Sciences into the professional schools except for Communication and the Arts, Diplomacy and International Relations or Education (in secondary schools) which work off the liberal arts subjects. Compared to the schools that its students most often consider, Seton Hall grants a higher percentage of education degrees than any school, including Rutgers, according to *College Results Online*. The university also has a much higher percentage of students in the health sciences—over a fifth of the seniors in the Class of 2013 earned degrees in these field—than schools such as Boston College, Fordham, Georgetown, NYU or Villanova, which also have have larger enrollments. The number of degree options, especially accelerated bachelors/masters programs is amazing for a school of this size. The depth of the offerings in communications, education, health professions and international affairs compares favorably with larger universities.

The honors program in the College of Arts and Sciences is no less rigorous than a classical liberal arts education offered by a school such as Holy Cross. Honors students take honors-level



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seminars freshman through junior year, writing an honors thesis during the senior year. They also offered the option of living in honors housing. The downside is that the program is not tied to any scholarships, unless the student earns them through financial aid or an academic department.

Seton Hall's business and accounting programs are accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, the international body that accredits business education. The leadership program within the business school was recently named the best among 500 programs by hr.com, a human resources media site. This program includes coursework, mentoring, simulated business exercises, study abroad and regular interactions with executives from the freshman through the senior year. An excellent student who is serious about business, and wants to attend a school in or around New York City, should consider this program. Successful completion of the program will make a graduate exceptionally competitive with peers enrolled in more selective business schools.

Being a Catholic school, Seton Hall requires courses in Christianity, Religion and Philosophy in addition to liberal arts requirements in the humanities, social sciences, mathematics and natural sciences as well as courses required by the school within the university and the major. While Seton Hall welcomes students of all faiths, it helps to be willing to discuss a religious identity.

Students are less likely to see large classes at Seton Hall than they might see at larger schools that offer similar majors. The university advertises an average undergraduate class of 21 students. Only two percent of all classes offered at Seton Hall in 2014 had more than 50 students; nearly half had fewer than 20. By comparison, over a fifth of the undergraduate courses offered at Rutgers-New Brunswick had more than 50 students; less than 40 percent had fewer than 20.

Seton Hall students gave their faculty an average rating of 3.74 (out of 5.00) on RateMyProfessors.com. They held their faculty in about the same regard as students at Fordham (3.71), NYU (3.75), Rutgers (3.74), Sacred Heart (3.70) and Saint Joseph's (3.70); students at Boston College (3.93), Georgetown (3.83) Villanova (3.83) held their faculty in higher regard for their teaching.

Community

Seton Hall has a very well-maintained campus. While the university has been at its current location since 1856, and has several attractive 19th century buildings, most other buildings, aside from the business school and the recreation center, appear to have been designed during the 1970's and look very much the same. The university has many graduate students who commute, as do undergraduates who live off campus or at home, so parking is a premium. Among students who choose to live on campus, only seniors may have cars. It is very easy to get around the campus, which is secured all around.

Liquor law violations are the most oft-reported crimes on campus, according to the university's [Clery Report](#). There were more than 200 reported disciplinary referrals each year from 2012 through 2014 that were alcohol related, though only one arrest related to liquor law violations was



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made each year. Drug-related disciplinary referrals trended upward from 34 to 57. There were also three reported incidents of non-statutory rape in 2014 as well as four reported incidents of fondling and five reported incidents of domestic violence against women. Reported burglaries did decline from 10 in 2012 to two in 2013, then three the following year.

A member of the Big East, Seton Hall competes in 14 scholarship varsity sports. This past season the men's and women's basketball teams made it into the NCAA Tournament. In 1989 the men's team came within two points of winning the final game against the University of Michigan. Seton Hall has also been an East Coast power in baseball. Recent Hall of Fame inductee Craig Biggio is an alumnus as are former All-Star first baseman Mo Vaughn, former All-Star relief pitcher Jason Grilli and former Yankee catcher Rick Cerone.

Only 14 miles from New York City, South Orange is one of the Garden State's older suburban communities. It was one of the first New Jersey suburbs to welcome transplants from New York City as well as Newark. Downtown South Orange, served by trains to New York City, is clean and attractive, as benefiting a relatively well-to-do community that also serves a mid-sized university. However, the campus borders on Newark, which is quite the opposite. Seton Hall is quite close to the Garden State Parkway (Exit 142B), but its a rough ride to get to campus from there.

Comforts

Seton Hall houses 1,000 freshmen in two halls, Aquinas and Boland, which takes care of about three quarters of the class. A first-year experience program is run in the halls utilizing an academic adviser/mentor, the peer adviser and a University Life course for each freshman. The university also has a Sophomore Discovery program for students who live in the halls the next year. All resident students must carry a meal plan.

Seton Hall houses less than half of the undergraduate student body in [six on-campus residence halls and two apartment buildings](#). The apartment buildings [collectively house fewer than 200 students](#). Given that New York is a draw for students, and Seton Hall offers summer classes, off-campus living might be a better option for some juniors and seniors. Students live in houses near campus as well as apartment buildings in South Orange and the surrounding communities, including Newark, [but the rents for the nicer units are extremely expensive](#). Seton Hall has fraternities and sororities though they do not have their own houses. According to data that the university submitted to *US News*, Greek life attracts nine percent of the men and 11 percent of the women on campus.

Connections

Seton Hall has more than 100,000 living alumni. Among the more than 47,000 registered in [LinkedIn.com](#), over 32,000 live and/or work around New York City. Over 2,200 are based around Philadelphia while more than 1,000 are in and around Washington DC. Nearly 4,900 work in the education sector and 4,000 work in health care while over 2,500 are media professionals. Finance, marketing, entrepreneurship and consulting are all well represented. Notable Seton Hall alumni include Rutgers athletic director Patrick Hobbs, actor Dule' Hill, ESPN broadcaster and



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former college and NBA basketball coach Dick Vitale, among many others. Seton Hall are quite prominent in New Jersey politics as well as Major League Baseball.

The university's location, with easy mass transit access to Newark and New York, makes alumni interactions more frequent than you might find at similar-sized schools. The leadership program in the business school, previously mentioned, is only one example of how Seton Hall leverages its alumni base. Overall, the university advertised that 124 alumni represented their organizations at career fairs and networking forums and/or served as program presenters and on-campus interviewers during 2014-15. The Career Center also offers *Alumni Navigator*, a dedicated job board exclusively for Seton Hall alumni as well as an alumni career mentor program (Pirate Mentors)

Seton Hall is one school where it is very easy to build a resume, if you are willing to do the work. The university advertises that more than 17,000 internships were posted to students in 2014-15, impressive considering that it has less than 6,000 students, and about half had not declared a major. Eighty percent of the students who graduated in 2015 had worked in at least one internship while pursuing their degree. The career center publishes its [most recent outcomes](#) in detail, and they are quite impressive. More than 450 organizations recruited on campus in 2014-15. Seton Hall also participates in Big East Virtual Career Fair and the Big East Career Fair held at Madison Square Garden in New York City.

Conclusions

Seton Hall presents an attractive value proposition for students who want to attend college close to New York City as well as take advantage of the opportunity to get an early start on building their professional resumes. The Public Tuition Rate as well as other scholarship programs and the honors programs position Seton Hall to attract the students who are more likely to succeed.

It is also a smaller school than Rutgers as well as other highly-selective Catholic universities, though the academic breadth is close to that of larger schools. Instruction is likely to be more personal. It is also as much of a spirit and sports school as any other in the Big East, with a large alumni base in the New York metropolitan area. And, with the planned opening of a medical school, Seton Hall will be a more comprehensive research university than it is today.

But no college is perfect, including Seton Hall. The student body is very "Jersey-centric." Students are more likely to leave campus not only to work, but also to go home as well as take advantage of the attractions in New York City. The local housing market near campus is limited for upper-class students, while the university cannot house half of its undergraduates on campus. The university borders on Newark, not the safest of cities.

The Public Tuition Rate program also represents a risk for students who want to take on one of the more demanding academic programs. Fall below 3.0 and your tuition and fees jump to nearly \$40,000. It is especially hard to maintain high grades in programs in accounting, the health professions and the sciences. The risk is something to keep in mind when shopping for a college.

For students who are from New Jersey and/or want to go to school near New York City, Seton Hall is a "best buy" among private colleges, provided that they can earn a scholarship that will



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help them address the housing costs. But, because the university is separated into eight schools, it helps to have an academic direction before you start. Those who get the best return on their investment in a Seton Hall education appear to be the students who came in with good ideas of what they wanted from the experience.

Report Card- Seton Hall University

Four-Year/Six-Year Graduation Rates: B/B

Freshman Retention: B+

Costs: A

Curriculum: A

Community: B+

Comforts: B

Connections: A