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Hobart and William Smith Colleges

Located in Geneva, New York, Hobart and William Smith Colleges are coordinate liberal arts colleges. Hobart, originally for men, was founded in 1822. William Smith, for women, was founded in 1908. While the coordinate colleges share the same faculty, administration, academic curriculum, residence and dining options (though some remain all male or all female) and student services, they each still have their own student governments, deans and athletic teams. As coordinate colleges, Hobart and William Smith have just over 2,200 full-time undergraduates. The academic programs are all traditional liberal arts majors, though many cross-disciplinary programs are also available.

Hobart and William Smith is not exceptionally selective, but it appears to seek a B+ (3.5 GPA) student or better. It is test optional, but the average SAT for those who submitted their scores, is around 1240. The average ACT Composite was a 28. Interestingly, the Colleges enrolled 45 percent of their class that entered in 2016 through Early Decision, very high for a private liberal arts school.

The most similar schools, based on academics, location, culture and student body size are probably Connecticut College, Dickinson College (PA) and Gettysburg College (PA). Hobart and William Smith Colleges also [recognize these schools as peers](#), so it is only fair to make comparisons to them throughout this profile. However, all three of those schools, while test optional, are more selective, according to the data that each school submitted for *US News*' most recent college guide. While Hobart and William Smith offered admission to 60 percent of its applicants in 2016, Gettysburg and Dickinson accepted 43 percent. Connecticut College was even more selective, offering admission to 35 percent.

Hobart and William Smith retained 87 percent of the freshmen who entered in 2016. That's very good for a private liberal arts college, though the most similar schools do better (Gettysburg 90%, Dickinson 91%, Connecticut 90%). The Colleges graduated 72 percent of the freshmen who entered in 2010. That's also very good, although the most similar schools did better (Gettysburg 84%, Dickinson 81%, Connecticut 81%).

Costs

Hobart and William Smith is an expensive school. Tuition and fees are approximately \$53,500, about the same as Connecticut, Dickinson or Gettysburg. Room and board charges are about \$13,500, about \$1,000 less than Connecticut, and \$1,000 more than Gettysburg.

Although these schools charge about the same, there are some interesting differences. The three similar schools meet a higher percentage of financial need (Gettysburg 90%,



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Dickinson 100%, Connecticut 100% versus 79% for Hobart and William Smith) and left their 2016 graduates who borrowed with less average debt (Gettysburg \$31,200, Dickinson \$26,900, Connecticut \$27,500 versus \$34,500 for Hobart and William Smith). One consideration: the endowments of the more similar schools: Connecticut (\$284 million in Fiscal Year 2015), Dickinson (\$415 million) and Gettysburg (\$284 million) are respectably larger than the endowment of the Colleges (\$197 million), according to the National Association of College and University Business Officers.

However, Hobart and William Smith offered larger merit scholarships, on average, than any of the other three schools. The average merit award was \$14,500 in 2015-16, over \$3,000 more than the second-largest average award (Dickinson College). Renewable [merit-based awards](#) range from \$5,000 to \$35,000 per year. Just over a third of the undergraduate student body had received a merit-based award in 2015-16, according the Colleges' most recent Common Data Set.

Curriculum

Hobart and William Smith sets its general education requirements to be completed through [eight goals](#), much like the distribution requirements of similar liberal arts colleges. The difference is that Hobart and William Smith encourages students to fulfill the eight goals around classes that are complementary to the major and possibly a minor versus choosing a course for the sake of filling a requirement. Only two classes offered at Hobart and William Smith in 2015-16 had more than 40 students. Over two-thirds of all classes (68 percent) had fewer than 20.

There are only three required courses at Hobart and William Smith: a writing-intensive First-Year Seminar, a writing-intensive course in the major and a Senior Capstone, which can be a paper, exhibition or project. Thirty-two units, typically four courses per semester, are required to earn a degree. While the Colleges do not have a summer school, they offer a three-week "May-mester" where students may take one course on campus for three weeks, for an additional charge of \$3,000 plus room and board. This is an opportunity unique to Hobart and William Smith versus the three similar schools.

Hobart and William Smith Colleges [offer 45 majors, many of which could also be a minor, as well as 24 unique minors and concentrations](#). There are also [joint-degree options](#) in Engineering, Business (towards the MBA) and Nursing. While the engineering programs are comparable to partnerships offered by the three similar schools, the business and nursing partnerships are unique to Hobart and William Smith.

Hobart and William Smith students gave their faculty a rating of 3.75 (out of a possible 5) on [RateMyProfessors.com](#). By comparison, Connecticut College (3.84), Dickinson College (3.8) rated their faculty higher. Gettysburg College students rated their faculty lower (3.66)



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Community

Hobart and William Smith Colleges share a campus of more than 300 acres. The setting, on Seneca Lake, the largest of the Finger Lakes, is one of the nicest one could find for a liberal arts college. The campus has the look and feel of a very expensive school through its academic buildings, student-oriented facilities, dining and residence halls. Many buildings follow architectural styles that you will find older colleges such as Trinity College (CT) or Yale. The coordinate colleges also make great use of the waterfront not only for sports and recreation, but also for academics.

The College's [Clery Report](#) shows a high number of recently reported incidents of rape (14 reported on campus in 2016) and stalking (7 reported on campus in 2016). In addition, the number of reported alcohol-related disciplinary referrals rose each year from 335 in 2014 to 474 in 2016. That's high for a school that has around 2,200 students living on or near campus, with many studying abroad during any given semester. However, it is also possible that the numbers in Clery Report could be the result of better reporting and law enforcement by the Colleges.

The Colleges compete in 23 NCAA Division III (non-scholarship) varsity sports. Hobart and William Smith each have their own teams, competing mainly in the Liberty League against schools such as Ithaca, Rochester and Skidmore, among others. The Colleges also compete in Ice Hockey and Sailing outside of the conference. The Colleges' most notable athlete in recent years has been [Ali Marpet](#), starting center for the National Football League's Tampa Bay Buccaneers. In 2015, he was the highest-drafted player from an NCAA Division III school in the NFL Draft. Marpet was also selected to the NFL's All-Rookie team in his first season. The Colleges have also fielded one of the best crew programs in the country for several years.

Hobart and William Smith is much like Connecticut, Gettysburg and Dickinson in that the college's success is tied to the economic fortunes of a small town. The difference is that Geneva, while located in a region that is popular for tourism and recreation—the Finger Lakes are New York's "Wine Country"—is a more isolated community than the towns where the other three colleges are based. [Geneva was chosen as an "All American City" by the National Civic League in 2015](#), the last city in New York, among only 13 recognized in the award's history, that has been so honored. [This year, the state awarded the city a \\$10 million grant towards the revitalization of its downtown](#). The downtown has interesting coffee shops and restaurants, and it is close to campus. But it does not have many entertainment options for college students. However, students are quite engaged in the community; [the Colleges have been a regular selection on the President's Higher Education Community Services Honor Roll for several years.](#)

Hobart and William Smith is almost equidistant to Syracuse (to the East) and Rochester (to the West) which have major concert facilities as well as other spectator sports and



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entertainment options. This is a fairly easy school for students to have cars to travel off campus; they would not be parked too far from residence halls, no matter their location.

Comforts

Virtually all students (90 percent) at Hobart and William Smith live on campus. Seniors may receive permission to live off campus, though they are also likely to live close by. HWS assigns first-year students to one of three [“neighborhoods”](#) based on their choice of First-Year Seminar and their answers to a questionnaire. Each neighborhood has a [faculty fellow](#) as well as student advisors. They may be assigned to double, triple or quad rooms. [There are also options for freshmen to live in First-Year Seminar and Interest Living-Learning Communities.](#)

Upper-class students also live in the [neighborhoods](#). Given Hobart and William Smith’s history as coordinate colleges, there are more upper class housing choices than other similar schools. The Colleges offer all-male, all-female and co-ed living options as well as corridor-style, suite-style, apartment-style, [even small and medium sized houses](#) and converted mansions for women who live in the William Smith Hill Neighborhood. Greek social fraternities attract about a fifth of the Hobart men, but there are no sororities for the William Smith women. The seven [fraternities](#) also have their own houses.

While Hobart and William Smith students may apply to live off campus, it really makes little sense to do so, especially for students who intend to [study abroad](#) during an academic year, or for seniors who plan to leave Geneva after they graduate.

Connections

The Colleges have more than 22,000 living alumni as well as a fairly high (just under 30 percent) average alumni giving rate, according to the most recent *US News College* guide.

More than 16,000 alumni are registered on [LinkedIn.com](#). Of these, nearly 1,100 remained in the Rochester (NY) area; the largest group, over 4,200 are based in or near New York City. Nearly 2,300 are clustered within or around Boston, more than 1,000 within or around the Baltimore-Washington Corridor. Outside of the Northeast, the Colleges have over 400 alumni in the San Francisco Bay Area and nearly 300 around Denver and Los Angeles.

[Career services](#) are excellent, including the [Pathways](#) program for first-year students, Experience and [Guaranteed Internship](#) programs. The Experience Programs offer students the opportunity to interact with professionals in the arts, finance, government and the media in Los Angeles, New York and Washington DC. The Colleges are a member of the [Liberal Arts Career Network](#), a consortium of 39 liberal arts colleges that



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share internship and job posting. Among the three most similar schools, only Dickinson College is a member.

Conclusions

Hobart and William Smith Colleges are slightly less selective than nearly all of the schools that [it considers to be peers](#), including those that are most similar in their student body size and academic programs. But the Colleges provide services and programs of at least equally high quality and deliver similar results for their students and alumni. Some prospective students might find the location too isolated or the Colleges more “campus centered” than they would like. But the same is true for many other selective liberal arts colleges.

Choosing between Hobart and William Smith and similar liberal arts schools is difficult to do without visiting and spending one or two nights on campus with the students who are already there. Graduates can leave with a very good degree and a future direction from any of these schools. But its also important to leave with a network of friends for life.

Report Card: Hobart and William Smith Colleges

- Four-Year/Six-Year Graduation Rates: A/A
- Freshman Retention: A
- Costs: C
- Curriculum: A
- Community: B+
- Comforts: A
- Connections: A