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HISTORY

Princeton University is a private, Ivy League research university in Princeton, New Jersey, United States. Founded in 1746 in Elizabeth as the College of New Jersey, Princeton is the fourth-oldest institution of higher education in the United States and one of the nine colonial colleges chartered before the American Revolution. The institution moved to Newark in 1747, then to the current site nine years later, where it was renamed Princeton University in 1896.

LOCATION

The campus is located on 500 acres in the heart of New Jersey. Visitors set aside time to explore the region, which includes numerous shops and restaurants, art exhibitions and events, and many parks and historical sites. Princeton is roughly equidistant from New York City and Philadelphia. NJ TRANSIT trains passing through Princeton Junction provide direct service to New York City and Newark Liberty International Airport. Students can also take the train at Trenton, which provides service to Philadelphia. Amtrak trains also connect to Washington, D.C., Boston, and the greater region.

EXCHANGE PARTNERS

Princeton University has established exchange agreements with the institutions below that allow students from these schools to attend Princeton for study/research programs. Princeton does not accept short-term visiting students except those from recognized exchange partners.

Bocconi University Milan, Italy	Tsinghua University Beijing, China	University of Cantabria Santander, Spain
Institut d'Études Politiques (Sciences Po) Paris, France	University of Oxford Engineering Oxford, England	University of Tokyo Tokyo, Japan
University of Hong Kong School of Engineering Hong Kong, China	ETH Zurich Zurich, Switzerland	National University of Singapore Singapore
	École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) Lausanne, Switzerland	

Students arriving on the exchange are fully integrated into university life and have full access to all the services that Princeton offers. Academically, students will be assigned to a primary department based on their academic interests (for Engineering students, normally students should plan to take at least 50% of their courses in the School of Engineering). However, students

are also encouraged to take any additional courses for which they have an interest and the necessary academic preparation or background.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

The full calendar for Princeton University can be found [here](#). **Exchange students will be required to arrive on a day the week prior to the start of classes, to be determined by OIP.** Students arriving earlier than required will need to make alternative housing arrangements before the official start date of the program. Students may not arrive later than the official start date except in certain emergency circumstances.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Undergraduate students at Princeton normally take **4 courses** across a range of disciplines, and exchange students will be required to take a full course load unless alternative requirements are agreed upon with the sending institution. Engineering students should take at least 50% Engineering courses; for other departments outside of Engineering, it is more flexible, but it is still recommended that at least half of the courses be within the host department at Princeton. For specific course offerings in all departments, please consult the [Princeton University Course offerings database](#). For the full list of areas of study, please see [here](#).

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

Generally, **class attendance** is mandatory, and a portion of a student's final grade often comes from class participation. **Exams** must be taken during official examination sessions and may only be taken at Princeton unless a student can demonstrate compelling academic reasons for an exception. The exam format may vary and might also include take-home assignments and projects. Since each course may be different, we suggest that students carefully read the final detailed syllabus of the course, usually made available at the beginning of the semester, and always discuss those details with the instructor. **Grading** is normally based on a variety of different things. In some courses, the final grade might be the result of different elements such as group work, assignments, essays, and class participation. Students should always clarify with the instructor the exam rules, as well as the weight of class discussions and assignments (e.g., group work) on the final grade. Students are responsible for requesting their **transcript** directly from the [Registrar's Office](#) at the end of the semester to be sent to their home university.

HOUSING & DINING

Princeton on-campus housing consists of [Residential Colleges](#) and upper-classmen housing. The residential college system provides students not simply with housing and dining options, but also advice and other resources to assist them in taking advantage of all that Princeton has to offer. The goal of the colleges is to "create a strong sense of community, collaboration and mutual respect, and to support individual initiative and personal growth."

Students will indicate a housing preference in their application, housing is in high demand on campus, and, therefore, a student's first choice is not guaranteed. If students are placed in upper-classmen housing, students will be affiliated with a Residential college and will be fully included in the college's advising system and all the college activities. The dining plan options can be found on the [Campus Dining website](#).

STUDENT LIFE

Exchange students have the same access to libraries, computing facilities, and health services as regularly enrolled students. The campus hosts numerous student events and guest speakers, from the world famous to more esoteric experts, which are open to exchange students. In addition, residential colleges hold regular student events and activities that exchange students will be invited to attend. There are many [student clubs](#) to join, including special interest groups, cultural/religious groups, pre-professional groups, performing arts groups, and sports clubs.

EXPENSES

Exchange students normally pay tuition to their home institutions (except for students coming from the University of Hong Kong, who pay Princeton tuition). Students should also budget for expenses associated with their on-campus room, meals, books, travel, and other personal expenses.

Estimated costs per semester for AY 25-26:

- **Tuition:** \$32,605 (only for students from HKU; all other students pay home school tuition)
- **Housing:** \$6,225
- **Meals:** The lowest dining plan (Block 105) is \$1,617 for the semester. This will allow 105 meals per semester plus an additional 30 free meals. The Unlimited Plan is unlimited entry to the dining halls and costs \$4170 for the semester.
- **Princeton Student Health Plan:** \$1900 for the semester (\$3800 for the year)
- **International airfare:** depending on where you come from, it could be anywhere from \$1000 - \$2000.
- **Books and Personal Expenses:** \$2,025

TIMELINE (APPROX.)

	Fall 2025/Academic Year 25-26	Spring 2026
Exchange nomination deadline	April 1, 2025	September 1, 2025
Students may apply	As soon as notified by OIP	As soon as notified by OIP
Princeton online application due	April 15, 2025	September 15, 2025
Acceptance decisions	Early May, 2025	Early to Mid-October, 2025
Mandatory Virtual Orientation	Mid-Summer, 2025	Early November, 2025
Course registration	Late August, 2025	Late November, 2025
Classes start	September 2, 2025	January 26, 2026
Add/drop period	September 2 – September 16	January 20 – February 6, 2026
Midterms	October 6 – 10, 2025	March 2 – 6, 2026
Fall Break	October 11 – 19, 2025	N/A
Spring Break	N/A	March 7 – March 15, 2026
Thanksgiving Break	November 25 – 30, 2025	N/A
Classes end	December 4, 2025	April 24, 2026
Reading period	December 5 – 12, 2025	April 27 – May 5, 2026
Exams	December 13 – 19, 2025	May 8 – 14, 2026

APPLICATION PROCESS

Students must be nominated by their home institution to participate in the exchange. Next, after being contacted by Princeton's exchange manager, they apply through Princeton's online [Global Programs System](#) (GPS) by clicking "**Apply Now.**" Scans of all required documents are accepted. Specific instructions can be found in the application, but you will need to include:

- Academic Information (for all) & Research Background and Interests (if applicable)
- Two Essay Questions
- Résumé /CV
- Official Home School Transcript
- Faculty Recommendation Letter
- Proof of English language ability (if applicable)*

***English language ability:** A minimum score of 100 on the internet based TOEFL, or a 7 on the IELTS, is required for students from École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL), Institut d'Études Politiques (Sciences Po), Tsinghua University, University of Cantabria, and the University of Tokyo. Exceptions may be made for native English speakers. Your home school may require additional documents, so consult with them before applying.

*Complete student applications are due to Princeton **by September 15 for spring semester or by April 15 for fall semester or full academic year.** However, individual institutions will have their own nomination/application deadlines so please consult with them about internal deadlines and requirements.*