

Why Johns Hopkins? – Johns Hopkins University - College Review

Essentials:

Johns Hopkins is situated in several different campuses in the City of Baltimore, the suburbs in surrounding suburban Maryland, Washington DC and other locations around the world including China and Italy. The main undergraduate campus is named the Homewood Campus and is located in the North Baltimore neighborhood of Charles Village, 3 miles north of the Downtown Inner Harbor area. Many undergraduates participate in research projects at the Johns Hopkins Medical Center in the Medical Institutions Campus which is located in East Baltimore, a shuttle bus ride away from the main Homewood Campus.

The Homewood Campus provides a peaceful, compact and walkable country-like environment in the midst of a major city. The Campus is beautifully landscaped with an abundance of trees and flowers, expansive green lawns with Georgian style brick buildings adorned with marble. Johns Hopkins has completed an extensive series of building projects and renovations to update older facilities on this campus resulting in an even more usable and attractive environment.

Students often praise the lack of a core curriculum allowing the flexibility of choice to try different courses and pursue a variety of academic interests. For this reason, completing a double major at Johns Hopkins is realistic. There are overall distribution requirements for graduation; however, they are not as stringent as those found at many other schools of this caliber. A student can, to a large extent, personalize their education.

Strength of the School:

From its roots of Johns Hopkins' founding in 1876 as a university dedicated to research, the school has continued as a national research leader and is especially well known for work in the sciences and medicine. As a leading center of research, Johns Hopkins has attracted a particularly distinguished faculty that has produced 36 Nobel Prize winners and an extensive array of additional academic awards winners.

The academic environment is one of the most challenging of any school in the country attracting some of the world's most accomplished students. Johns Hopkins is a serious school for dedicated students who also wish to complement their education with numerous opportunities to be involved in research projects and community service. Students do concentrate on their studies and tend to be more competitive versus their own high standards rather than one another. Students generally cooperate with one another especially if assistance is requested by a fellow student.

Johns Hopkins' reputation over the years was strongest in its premed and sciences programs. The school has evolved to a point where it now provides top-ranked programs in the humanities, social sciences and

engineering as well. The availability of generous financial aid added to the increasing availability of high quality academic programs in many more areas of study has attracted a more diverse set of well-rounded students with a wider variety of interests and outlooks than ever before. Therefore, Johns Hopkins has become more fun to attend than in the past. Currently, working hard and playing hard and having a reasonably good social life are more the accepted norm by Johns Hopkins students.

Academics:

- Johns Hopkins has the resources available to provide a truly outstanding academic environment. There are two undergraduate divisions on the main Homewood Campus which are the larger Krieger School of Arts and Sciences which offers 60 different undergraduate degrees and the Whiting School of Engineering which offers options in approximately 30 different fields of study. These two schools also offer a wide array of graduate level programs. The Peabody Institute is a leading music conservatory run by Johns Hopkins independently from the other two schools mentioned above. It is located in its own historic building in the Mount Vernon neighborhood of Baltimore not far from the downtown Inner Harbor area.
- Other graduate and professional schools include a School of Education, Nursing, Medicine, Public Health and a relatively newly established undergraduate and graduate level Carey Business School. These schools are located on the Homewood Campus, the Medical Institutions Campus in East Baltimore plus other locations around the city. The School of Advanced International Studies can be found in Washington DC with branches in China and Italy. Johns Hopkins also runs the Applied Physics Lab (APL) located in Laurel, Maryland that works in close cooperation with the US Department of Defense and NASA.
- Johns Hopkins does not have a core curriculum; however, it does have a flexible system of Distribution Requirements. Students often complement the implementation of Johns Hopkins Distribution Requirements that provide students the flexibility to experiment with their choice of classes and academic interests. Students must earn at least 30 credits in courses from areas outside their major to meet graduation requirements. Twelve credits of writing intensive courses must also be taken and individual majors have their own requirements.
- A top grade is truly earned at Johns Hopkins. The grade inflation found at many other schools is not the norm here, a grade is determined on a curve so a strong academic work ethic is mandatory at this school. A student has to be ready to be dedicated to academic achievement and rigorous study.
- Over 36 Nobel Prize winners have been associated with Johns Hopkins over the years including four winners on the current faculty. The faculty also contains numerous MacArthur fellows, Presidential honorees, along with National Academy of Science and Academy of Arts and Science members. The quality of the faculty can be compared favorably to any other of the top universities in the country. Johns Hopkins is a research powerhouse and is especially well regarded in the sciences and medical research. Undergraduate students are very much engaged in research opportunities with over 80% participation. It is routine for a Johns Hopkins undergraduate student to perform research.

- Even though Johns Hopkins professors are quite routinely experts in their fields and dedicated to research, they have earned a good reputation with the undergraduates as approachable and responsive to students' needs and are available to answer questions and schedule quality time with students outside classroom hours.
- The academic transition to Johns Hopkins is aided by a policy implemented by the school that allows grades from the first semester of the freshman year to be recorded as satisfactory/unsatisfactory and are not counted towards a student's overall Hopkins GPA.

Student/Social Life:

- Johns Hopkins' social scene has improved over the years. The student population has become more ethnically diverse with a significant amount of international students now attending the school. The student population has adopted a work hard, play hard attitude with a widening variety of activities of all sorts available.
- 25% of students are involved in Greek Life. Greek Life does tend to dominate the school's social scene for freshman and sophomores.
- Many upper-class students live off campus in apartments adjacent to the Homewood Campus. Social life for older students tends to gravitate off campus.
- Baltimore is a city of neighborhoods with several frequented by Johns Hopkins students. Neighborhoods are interconnected by Johns Hopkins shuttle buses, public transportation and are usually within a reasonably priced taxicab ride away. The Downtown Inner Harbor area and other downtown neighborhoods of Fells Point, Little Italy, and Canton are visited by students along with the increasingly trendy Hampden neighborhood west of the Homewood Campus. North and past the city limits of Baltimore and also a short trip away is the suburban community of Towson, Md. with malls and entertainment choices plus restaurants of many varieties.
- Freshman and sophomores live together on the Homewood Campus in an assortment of well regarded housing. Traditionally on-campus housing was not guaranteed to upperclassman, many live off campus in apartments in the immediate vicinity. A relatively new upper-class complex named Charles Commons opened on campus and provided a very attractive alternative to living off campus.
- Participation in community service activities is very popular by students. Johns Hopkins' students are very involved in helping out in the Baltimore community. In addition, there are over 350 student groups and organizations on campus.
- A nationally ranked Division I Lacrosse team is actively supported and followed by students. Other sports such as baseball, basketball, soccer, tennis and track compete on a Division III level and are not as well supported by the student body. Hopkins is a school dominated by academics with following school teams with the exception of Lacrosse is not a priority. On the other hand, more than half of the students participate in one of 20 club sports offered by the school.

Location:

Baltimore is a city of 600,000 residents living in a wide variety of neighborhoods. A total of 2.7 million people live in the Baltimore – Washington Metro area. Several of these neighborhoods are frequented by Johns Hopkins students while many others should be avoided. Baltimore does face a wide assortment of urban challenges with personal safety in some areas of the city a real concern such as around the Medical School in East Baltimore. The area around the Homewood Campus is perfectly acceptable. Areas to be visited and enjoyed by students are the Inner Harbor, Harbor East, Little Italy, Fells Point, Canton and Hampden. In addition, Washington DC is a very commutable one hour by train away and is often visited. Students can enjoy the sights of our nation's capital and the wide variety of entertainment venues available in this large and increasingly popular city to live in.

Don't go to Johns Hopkins if:

Johns Hopkins is a mid-sized school of over 5,100 undergraduates where academics are the first priority of the students. It is a serious school for serious students with social life important, however, a second priority of many students. There is a lot more library time than party time at Johns Hopkins. If your expectations are for a more socially oriented school with a large and active party scene and Division I sports, Johns Hopkins is not the right choice for you.

Johns Hopkins – College Specific Questions to Ask the Interviewer:

- How accessible and supportive were the professors at Johns Hopkins?
- How flexible were the distribution requirements and how did they influence your academic career?
- What were some of the research and community services opportunities available at Johns Hopkins?
- What part did Greek Life play at John Hopkins?
- How would you rate the living facilities at Johns Hopkins?
- How would you rate Baltimore as a college town?
- How would you characterize the average student attending Johns Hopkins?
- How has Johns Hopkins changed since the time you attended compared to now?

Johns Hopkins Quick Facts:

Johns Hopkins General Website:

<http://jhu.edu/>

Johns Hopkins Financial Aid:

http://webapps.jhu.edu/jhuniverse/admissions/financial_aid/

Johns Hopkins Campus Maps:

http://webapps.jhu.edu/jhuniverse/information_about_hopkins/campuses/homewood_campus/

Johns Hopkins Nickname: Blue Jays

Johns Hopkins Athletics:

<http://www.hopkinssports.com/>

Johns Hopkins Undergraduates: 5,150

Johns Hopkins Famous Alumni:

Michael Bloomberg

Russell Baker

PJ O'Rourke

Wes Craven

Richard Ben Cramer

Wolf Blitzer

John Barth