

Why Northwestern? - Northwestern University - College Review

Essentials:

Northwestern University possesses more of a pre-professional atmosphere when compared to most schools of its caliber. Students will talk about their GPAs and striving to earn good grades is the accepted norm at Northwestern University. It has much in common with The University of Pennsylvania, Duke and Stanford because of its emphasis on preparation for a future career. Northwestern is considered one of the most elite schools in the Midwest, however, it is not quite as well known on the coasts and in the South.

Northwestern University is the only private school to compete in the Big Ten athletic conference. Northwestern students can enjoy and root for teams that play on the Division I college level.

Northwestern has a historic and beautiful campus in a great location stretching for a mile along Lake Michigan with plenty of outdoor space and easy access to very attractive scenery and nature. Students appreciate that Northwestern's location offers an enviable mix of urban, suburban and outdoor lifestyles.

Northwestern is divided into a North Campus where technology dominates and a South Campus where the Arts and Sciences are found. The campus as a whole is known for having notably special academic facilities that house several nationally recognized undergraduate academic departments.

Strength of the School:

Northwestern offers an excellent balance of highly rated academics on par with the best schools in the country, a highly distinguished faculty which provide quality classroom instruction and Big Ten athletics. The school also offers a wide variety of extracircular activities, a beautiful lake front campus and an excellent place to live; Evanston, IL a suburb of 75,000, located one hour by train north of Chicago.

Academics are the first priority at Northwestern and students are focused on their studies and take pride in their accomplishments in the classroom. Rooting for the sports teams and a series of

traditional, campus wide events that attract enthusiastic participation by the majority of students help build a good level of school spirit.

Northwestern, especially in the Midwest, has an outstanding reputation and many national companies with headquarters in this region heavily recruit on campus and provide a ready job market for many graduates.

Academics:

- Northwestern is a highly competitive university with academics that are intense and students that are highly committed to doing well in their coursework.

- 50% of the students are enrolled in the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences and the remaining students are spread across five professional schools. Northwestern overall has a pre-professional atmosphere.

- All of the five professional schools have earned national reputations for academic excellence. There is The School of Engineering and Applied Science, The School of Education and Social Policy, The School of Communication, The School of Journalism and a School of Music.

- Northwestern has a distinguished faculty that is appreciated by the students. The students find that the professors are accessible and are available for consultation.

- Entry-level classes at Northwestern, especially in the more popular majors such as economics tend to take place in large lecture halls. As one progresses through their academic career, the overall atmosphere becomes more personal due to smaller and more manageable sized classes.

- A major strength of Northwestern is that classes are taught by faculty and not student assistants. This leads to a consistently high delivery of teaching in the classroom and students that are further motivated by the high quality of instruction to excel.

- Distribution requirements for graduation vary from college to college. For example, the largest school which is the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences requires proficiency in a foreign language plus two courses completed in each of five disciplines. Northwestern has a unique quarter system that accelerates the pace of academics and crams extra work into a shorter time frame. Students take four courses each quarter. The fast pace of the quarter system forces students to consistently keep up with their coursework and adds to the academic challenges of the school.

Student/ Social Life:

- Northwestern students have a well-established reputation that is somewhat misleading of being nerdy. As what is true of any college of over 8,000 undergraduates, there exists a diverse student body with many differing degrees of temperament and social styles. It is up to the student at Northwestern to find a comfortable niche.

- Northwestern offers many opportunities to get socially involved. It is a campus where the student body can be described as down to earth, friendly and open to meeting others. Northwestern students also tend to dress in a casual manner. Participation in extracurricular activities of all sorts is very popular.

- Various traditional, annual campus wide events occur at Northwestern that help bring students together and they help create an overall fondness for the school in the eyes of many students.

- Many students are from the Midwest and come from accomplished middle and upper-middle-class backgrounds. However, like many colleges of similar academic reputation, the availability of supportive financial aid does help attract a mix of students from across the country and from differing backgrounds.

- Greek life plays an essential role at Northwestern. 40% of the student population joins Greek organizations. Fraternity and sorority events comprise a great deal of the social life in freshman and sophomore years. House parties sponsored by upperclassman are popular and so is going out in Evanston and other neighborhoods in the area. Many upperclassman will choose to live off-campus in Evanston.

- Intramural sports are popular with opportunities to play a wide variety of different sports. Northwestern offers a range of first-class athletic facilities on campus.

- Admittance to all college sporting events is free for students. Attending sporting events are part of the student experience and help bring students together, however, it is not a main focus of student life.

- Campus dorms are comprised of residential halls and residential colleges. Residential colleges bring together students with similar academic interests and cultural similarities who wish to live together. There is a degree of living style differences between the various dorms.

- Northwestern offers six dining halls that all provide the same type of food. Dining halls rotate their menus in a way that on any given day there is a variety of types of food available.

- Evanston is an upscale and mostly suburban city of 75,000 residents. It contains the usual array of desirable national chain and local restaurants. It offers a reasonable amount of entertainment and many things to do. Chicago is more of a one-off trip taken once a month

typically rather than on a weekly or daily basis. Chicago is reached by the EL Line train, which is run by The Chicago Transit Authority.

Location:

Northwestern is located on the shore of Lake Michigan in Evanston, Illinois, north of Chicago one hour away from downtown by the CTA's elevated train. Chicago was a city that was on the upswing until recently and had implemented many things to improve itself as a place to live. It is the third-largest city in the United States and includes all of the vast amenities of a major city. It contains an assortment of cultural activities, entertainment and sports, premier educational institutions, restaurants and business enterprises that one would expect in a city of 2.8 million people and in the metro area, called Chicagoland of over 8.4 million people.

The city is in the midst of a downturn in population and as a preferred city for business. It is a city of distinctive neighborhoods and people and unfortunately the South Side and West Side are currently plagued by crime. However, the South Side and the West Side are not places students would normally venture. The effect of this crime problem diminishes the appeal of the city as a destination to visit. Students normally spend the vast majority of their time in Evanston. This location is far enough away in the suburbs to avoid these current events.

Don't go to Northwestern if:

Don't go if you don't want a social life dominated by Greek Life or a pre-professionally minded education. While Northwestern's social life does contain many facets, it is still dominated by Greek Life. Many students view this as the main component of the social scene at Northwestern especially Freshman and Sophomore years. Furthermore, most students at the school have a pre-professional approach to their academics and are highly conscious of their GPAs. In addition, Northwestern's unique quarter system adds to the intense and highly competitive academic environment. These two factors, Greek life and a pre-professional approach to academics help define the character of the school.

Northwestern Interview- College Specific Questions to Ask the Interviewer:

- What were some of the positive and negative aspects of Northwestern's academic quarter system?
- How would you rate Evanston and Chicago as places to go to college?
- How do you rate the quality and type of social life available at Northwestern?
- How much do varsity sports play a role at Northwestern?
- What are some of the annual events at Northwestern that you liked the most?

Northwestern University Quick Facts:

Northwestern General Website:

<http://www.northwestern.edu/>

Northwestern Financial Aid:

<http://undergradaid.northwestern.edu/>

Northwestern Campus Map:

<http://www.northwestern.edu/campus-life/campuses/maps/>

accepted10percent.com

Northwestern Nickname: Wildcats

Northwestern Athletics:

<http://www.northwestern.edu/campus-life/athletics/index.html>

Northwestern Undergraduates: 8,000

Northwestern Famous Alumni:

Stephen Colbert

Cindy Crawford

Rahm Emanuel

Ann Margaret

Shelley Long

Saul Bellow

Warren Beatty

George McGovern

Tony Randall