

Why Vanderbilt? - Vanderbilt University - College Review

Essentials:

Students typically spend Sunday in the library and Tuesday and Thursday evenings participating in a Greek sponsored event of some sort. Vanderbilt University students know when it's time to get down to work, participate in an event, organization or to just have a good time. Busy is the best adjective to describe a Vanderbilt student.

Vanderbilt includes several very highly regarded professional and graduate schools that offer the undergraduate the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of research projects. 30% of the student body is from the South and many students do come from wealthy backgrounds. On the other hand, Vanderbilt University has worked hard to admit an increasing number of students from all over the U.S. and the world. The student body now includes an international population of 8%. In addition, the availability of generous financial aid has allowed an increasingly diverse set of students to attend from more modest financial backgrounds. Therefore, a Vanderbilt student will find fellow students from all types of backgrounds and differing circumstances.

Greek life does to an extent dominate the social scene of the school with 40% of students being members of a fraternity or sorority. For those students not primarily interested in these sorts of social events, there are more than enough other activities plus the added advantage of easy access to Nashville to keep non-Greek students busy and with many social options.

Strengths of the School:

Vanderbilt offers an attractive balance between academics and an overall rewarding student life. Vanderbilt's academics are top-rated and the classroom experience is well regarded.

Students are active, engaged, friendly and ready to enjoy the college experience. The school offers what may be considered by many as an overwhelming choice of clubs, organizations and social activities to keep students happy and very busy.

Vanderbilt's campus is relatively compact, walkable and provides a serene, attractive and secure tree-lined environment only a mile and a half from downtown Nashville. Nashville provides a student friendly

environment. The city includes a wide variety of entertainment options with an emphasis on live music venues of all sorts plus restaurant and entertainment choices in an area that is increasingly regarded by many as a very desirable place to live.

Students take their studies very seriously and compete diligently for good grades; however, there is always time for fun and engaging in an interesting activity or party typically a Greek function of one sort or another.

Vanderbilt offers a special focus on the freshman experience by working hard to enable entering students to become more easily acclimated to college by offering several distinct programs. These programs include having all freshmen live together in their own residential college that is all-inclusive and includes combined academic and residential facilities. There are also other special programs that make the transition to Vanderbilt the first year much easier and allow students to make friendships that last for the entire four years.

Academics:

- Vanderbilt's academics can be characterized as rigorous and competitive. Students are seriously concerned with their GPAs. Devotion to long hours of study is common among Vanderbilt's students. Sunday is typically a day to spend in the library. There is also an academic Honor Code at Vanderbilt that is strongly enforced and adhered to.

- An undergraduate applies to one of four schools. They are the College of Arts and Sciences which is the largest and is focused on the liberal arts, The School of Engineering, the Peabody College of Education and Human Development and the Blair School of Music.

- Classes tend to be well received and rated by students. After freshman year where large lecture hall classes can be found, most of the following classes tend to have less than 30 students. Professors are considered to be very accessible to students.

- Vanderbilt mandates a core curriculum that is rated as flexible that includes requirements to take 13 courses distributed across six areas of inquiry. Freshman year includes special requirements such as a first year writing seminar. Vanderbilt offers close to 70 degree programs to choose from across all 4 undergraduate schools including 54 from the College of Arts and Sciences alone.

- Vanderbilt's six graduate and professional schools combined with several affiliated research centers and institutes plus a large and prestigious Medical Center offer a wide range of research opportunities for the undergraduate. The graduate and professional programs are offered by The Divinity School, The Law School, The Graduate School, The School of Medicine, The School of Nursing and The Owen Graduate School of Management.

Student Life:

- The compact and walkable campus is beautiful and is comprised of attractive brick buildings, green lawns and an abundance of trees. While the campus location is serene, secure and secluded, it is only a one and half miles from downtown Nashville. Over 80% of students live on campus.

- 40% of undergraduates are members of a fraternity or sorority. Greek life is prevalent on campus and it tends to dominate the social scene.

- Vanderbilt's students lead balanced lives, taking the challenging academic environment very seriously while engaging in an active social life just as seriously. Vanderbilt's students have a well deserved reputation for going out and participating in the party scene. They are often out all Saturday night and ready to study all day Sunday.

- A common complaint is that students may have too much going on between rigorous academics, a wide assortment of extracurricular activities and many social options. There is always a wide range of activities available at all times including sports, student organizations and Greek life and off campus attractions in Nashville.

- Vanderbilt is dominated by students that are smart, outgoing, social and friendly with many displaying a degree of southern hospitality. Dressing fashionably is not uncommon. The school is characterized as having a properly right sized student body. It is small enough for a student to be able to meet a great deal of their fellow students, however, large enough to be able to make new friends.

- There is a separate freshman campus with complete facilities called The Commons which provides a welcoming and warm introduction to Vanderbilt. Vanderbilt is moving to a residential college system of which the first year Peabody campus, nicknamed The Commons, is the first step in converting the entire college. The Commons includes 10 residential halls that house all first-year students. It was renovated and upgraded to be a self-contained environment with all of the facilities necessary for the freshman student including study rooms, cafeterias, stores, laundry facilities and many academic facilities. In addition to the first year living arrangements, a special program named Vanderbilt Visions provides the support structure necessary to make it easier for the new student to become acclimated to college.

- Vanderbilt competes in the highly competitive SEC athletic conference. Division I basketball, football and baseball are taken seriously and are followed by the students and the University community. College sports do not dominate the campus scene; however, they are appreciated as a fun diversion by Vanderbilt students.

Location:

Nashville has caught the eye of both the national media and business community as increasingly desirable place to live. It has been often noted by many visitors that Nashville's residents exhibit a degree of extraordinary friendliness, charm and Southern hospitality. Nashville is a city growing in size because of a business friendly climate attracting outside companies to relocate there and providing opportunities for job growth. Health care and the Music Industry are the two largest industries in town; however, the area has seen the growth in jobs for companies of all sizes including car manufacturing by Nissan. The metro area includes a population of 1.6 million and the city itself has a population of 570,000. Adding to its attractiveness, Nashville offers a mild and consistently pleasant climate. Live music venues has always been Nashville's strength, an emerging highly rated restaurant scene is adding an additional appealing quality of life element to the mix.

Don't go to Vanderbilt if:

The elite universities in America have worked hard through admittance and financial aid policies to diversify their student bodies. Vanderbilt is no exception and it has worked hard to attract and admit students from all types of backgrounds. Even with all this said, Vanderbilt has a special regional appeal in the South and is located in a distinctively southern city. Nashville is increasingly recognized by the national media and business community as a truly an excellent place to live and work; however, the location may not be for everybody.

Vanderbilt's social life offers many options and there are a wide variety of activities for a student to participate in. However, the social life of the campus is to a degree dominated by Greek life. 40% of Vanderbilt students join fraternities and sororities and their social activities are often the main attraction on campus any given day. If you have strong negative feelings towards a campus somewhat dominated by Greek life you may want to consider other colleges.

Vanderbilt Interview- College Specific Questions to Ask the Interviewer:

- What part did Greek life play at Vanderbilt?

- What type of student can be found at Vanderbilt?

- How would you rate Nashville as a place to go to college?

- What was the experience of following Vanderbilt's sports teams like?

- What was social and student life like at Vanderbilt?

- What was the typical weekend like at Vanderbilt?

Vanderbilt University Quick Facts:

Vanderbilt General Website:

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

Vanderbilt Financial Aid:

<http://www.vanderbilt.edu/financialaid/>

Vanderbilt Campus Map:

<http://www.vanderbilt.edu/map/>

Vanderbilt Athletics:

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

Vanderbilt Nickname: Commodores

Vanderbilt Undergraduates: 6,727

Vanderbilt Famous Alumni:

Amy Grant

Fred Thompson

Dinah Shore

James Dickey

Robert Penn Warren

Bill Bain

H. Ross Perot, Jr.

Lamar Alexander