

# Why Yale? - Yale University - College Review

## **Essentials:**

Yale University students are very happy with their college experience. Yale offers a very appealing blend of top-flight academics and the opportunities for a well-balanced social life. Yale possesses an active student body that is intellectually curious and also outgoing and fun seeking.

Yale University is a premier research institution that is exceptionally well committed to providing an outstanding undergraduate learning experience. The world-class faculty is devoted to undergraduate teaching. Yale has many highly qualified faculty members that provide consistent, excellent instruction. Disappointing teaching and faculty inaccessibility are rare exceptions at Yale.

Yale's Residential College system of student living provides the undergraduate a sense of community within the larger school and an enjoyable living experience from the first day of attending the University. The majority of student life occurs on campus and much of it takes place within the Residential Colleges.

The range of extracurricular activities, clubs and events provide students more than enough choices to satisfy them. Many other schools of this caliber are criticized for being overly bureaucratic and having strict administrations that do not devote enough resources to student needs. At Yale, it is just the opposite. A strong support structure begins right when a student steps on campus for their freshman year and continues throughout their stay at Yale University.

For many students, the worst part of the Yale experience is leaving the school after four enjoyable, rewarding and happy years.

## **Strength of the School:**

There are a relatively large number of academic distribution requirements at Yale, however, a student is granted a great degree of freedom on how they can meet the requirements. The academic requirements are flexible at Yale and a student has significant control over their academic course load. For the most part, a student is able to direct their studies.

A tradition at Yale is the “shopping period” at the start of each semester that allows students to audit a variety of classes for a two week period before making final decisions on class registration. Yale students tend to be highly self-motivated and possess a love of learning. Fellow students provide a supportive environment that encourages collaborative study rather than strict competition for grades. Yale students tend to be competitive with their own high standards.

Yale attracts a student body that is activist, experimental and expressive about a variety of issues. The students are “joiners” who participate in a wide range of extracurricular activities. Arts and politically active associations are well represented here. For any taste, there are ample opportunities to be an active participant.

### **Academics:**

- Yale allows a student to have a great deal of control over their educational experience. Yale requires that Freshmen and Sophomores receive a more general liberal arts education through the imposition of distribution requirements. Yale also wants students to concentrate more on their major during their Junior and Senior years. The general framework allows for a student to have a great deal of flexibility regarding actual course selection. Even with the distribution requirements, there's still enough flexibility in the system for a student to avoid receiving a truly well-rounded education at Yale.

- Yale has a strong support system for both academics and student life. Student life advisers are assigned through each of the Residential Colleges and every student is also assigned an academic advisor as an entering freshman.

- Yale has famous graduate-level and professional programs plus renowned research. Even with this, Yale's focus remains on the undergraduate teaching experience. The graduate institutions are available as a resource to enhance the undergraduate learning experience.

- Yale attracts a world-class faculty with many members acknowledged as leading scholars in their fields. What they all have in common is the genuine dedication and skills necessary to be strong undergraduate instructors.

- Yale is praised for its consistency in providing excellent undergraduate classroom instruction. The faculty is also accessible and they often provide students the ability to conduct research and offer opportunities to become co-authors of works. Generally, Yale students are very positive about their professors.

- Study groups are popular and a collaborative spirit exists among the students. Yale students, as a whole, are focused on achievement and learning while being self-directed.

- There is also an exceptionally vibrant alumni network and other resources available to Yale students to support their career and academic pursuits after graduation.

#### **Student/ Social Life:**

- It all starts with the Residential College experience. The Residential College system has a long, storied tradition at Yale. The model of Residential College has been copied by other schools such as Princeton. The idea behind the twelve Residential Colleges that house all Yale students is to create a strong sense of community and a place to call home within the larger University. From day one of entering Yale, a great deal of student life centers around belonging and identifying with one of the Residential Colleges.

- Each Residential College has their own dining hall, courtyard, administrative structures, libraries, athletic facilities, lounges and other exceptionally comfortable residential accommodations. There are many special events and intramural sporting competitions between residences. All in all, a strong loyalty to a student's Residential College grows over the years. A

strong sense of community develops between residents of each Residential College that greatly enhances a student's daily living experience.

- Each Residential College contains a representative cross-section of the composition of the entire student body. In other words, the Residential Colleges are twelve miniature Yales within the larger University community.

- Each Residential College is assigned a live-in Dean and a Master to support student needs. A Dean is responsible as the chief academic and personal advisor to students in each of the Residential Colleges. The Master is an overall advisor responsible for the well-being of a Residential College's students.

- The overall atmosphere at Yale, especially living in the Residential Colleges is very conducive for a student to make many lasting friendships.

- The Residential Colleges also sponsor a whole host of famous speakers and events. This includes informal "Master's Teas". Generally, these sessions at the Residential Colleges are very personal and allow close-up interaction with many famous and distinguished visitors to campus.

- There's a great deal of choice when it comes to activities. Participation in the arts is popular as well as political activism with a stronger emphasis on liberal rather than conservative causes. There are also excellent intramural sports and there is enhanced competition between Residential Colleges.

- Few students regularly attend varsity sporting events, the exception being the annual Harvard-Yale football game. The men's ice hockey team has been gaining popularity as they have gained recent success.

- The student body can be characterized as solidly middle-class with public school graduates well represented. International students are 10% of the student body. Yale attempts to make the student body more reflective of the racial and ethnic composition of the country.
- Yale offers a relaxed atmosphere and one that does so much to bring students together making the Yale experience memorable. Students, overall, are very fond of Yale.

**Location:**

The walkable and impressive campus is located in New Haven, Connecticut. Beautiful buildings and impressive architecture enhance the campus setting. New Haven offers the usual set of urban challenges and sometimes personal security can be an issue. It is a city of about 130,000 inhabitants that is turning itself around. Several neighborhoods are livable and a variety of good restaurants, stores and an impressive variety of cultural activities are within easy walking distance of campus. Weekend road trips to New York City and Boston are also possible. They're both within a commutable distance of about two hours.

**Don't go to Yale if:**

Don't go if you want a pre-professional education and want a social life dominated by off campus activities. At Yale, a student receives a world class liberal arts education, however, students who desire a more pre-professionally minded education will be disappointed. In addition Yale has a tradition of strong activism that is not suitable for everybody.

**Yale Interview- College Specific Questions to Ask the Interviewer:**

- How did the Residential College system contribute to your college experience?
- Yale prides itself on providing an excellent balance between academics and social life. In your opinion, to what degree does this balance exist?

- How is New Haven as a college town?
- How do you suggest taking full advantage of the course shopping period at the beginning of each semester?
- What distinguishes a Yale student?

### **Yale University Quick Facts:**

Yale General Website:

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

Yale Financial Aid:

<http://www.yale.edu/sfas/finaid/>

Yale Campus Map:

<http://map.yale.edu/map/>

Yale Athletics:

<http://www.yalebulldogs.com/landing/index>

Yale Nickname: Bull Dogs

Yale Undergraduates: 5,379

### **Yale Famous Alumni:**

George H. W. Bush

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William Howard Taft

Jodie Foster

John Kerry

William F. Buckley

Bob Woodward

Paul Giamatti