

About Bucknell

Bucknell was established in 1846 as the University at Lewisburg, the nation's 100th college or university in order of founding. It was renamed in 1886 in honor of William Bucknell, a major benefactor. It has enrolled women since 1883 and, although founded by Pennsylvania Baptists especially to train teachers and missionaries, it always has been open to students and faculty of all religious faiths and it is nondenominational today.

Over the years the University has steadily evolved from a local, denominational institution to a highly visible national institution. The 3,500 undergraduates and 81 graduate students are drawn from most states and 70 countries, including 15 percent who are students of color and 3 percent from abroad. Prospective undergraduate interest is such that only one third of the applicants can be admitted, and more than 70 percent of those who enroll are from the top one-tenth of their secondary school classes.

Among the institutions sharing the interests of Bucknell's applicants each year are most of the Ivy League universities, other prominent doctoral institutions such as Duke and Carnegie Mellon, and many of the finest liberal arts colleges, underscoring Bucknell's considerable stature in its 168th year.

The range of institutions with which observers align Bucknell bespeaks the University's distinctive institutional type. This type is decidedly undergraduate and collegiate, providing for personalized, liberal learning, yet it incorporates the curricular complexity and scope of significantly larger institutions.

Professional and preprofessional programs in the College of Engineering, music, education and management do more than coexist with the liberal arts and sciences. All of these programs operate with obvious excellence, and they often function synergistically to enhance the intellectual transformation of students that is Bucknell's *raison d'être*.

The Bucknell model for higher education dates to the late 19th century and the earliest years of the 20th century, when the University's fourth president, John Howard Harris, oversaw the institution of the engineering programs, the expansion of the education program, and the introduction of prelaw and premed programs.

Bucknell University awards Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees in more than 50 fields, including nine interdisciplinary programs – Animal Behavior, Cell Biology/Biochemistry, Comparative Humanities, Economics/Mathematics, Environmental Studies, International relations, Latin American Studies, Neuroscience, and Women's and Gender Studies. Approximately 80 percent of the students are enrolled in the College of Arts and Sciences and 20 percent in the College of Engineering. A small number of master's degrees are awarded in selected fields.

The undergraduate curriculum capitalizes on the strengths of Bucknell's entering students – the drive to succeed, a curiosity to understand, a desire to find meaning in daily life – while providing the foundation for a lifetime of learning. Requirements are structured to develop context – historical, cultural and geographic – for the study of nature and societies; the analytical tools and ability to reason; initiative and motivation to learn; and basic writing, quantification, and problem-solving skills.

Since students will be living and working in a world where intercultural competence and technology will demand broad perspective and transferable habits of thought, Bucknell includes both independent and collaborative learning, as well as focused study in international and modern culture and issues, as cornerstones of the undergraduate experience. More than 45 percent of each graduating class has studied abroad in approved programs in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia, South and Central America, Australia, New Zealand and Canada.

Great Teaching and Other Assets

Notwithstanding the variety of intellectual commitments and practices represented at Bucknell, the faculty aspire to be great teachers universally and single-mindedly. They practice a most direct, energetic and committed form of pedagogy, one result of which is a rich variety of close intellectual encounters between faculty and their students. Undergraduate research is emphasized in all areas of the curriculum, and it is made possible by the high level of the faculty's research and scholarship. Bucknell's faculty consists of more than 350 full-time members, nearly 97 percent with the Ph.D. or another terminal degree.

The faculty's strong relations with students have much to do with Bucknell's extraordinary graduation rates – 89 percent within five years – which annually rank among the highest few in the nation. Employment and graduate school placement figures are also very high, and Bucknell ranks 17th among private liberal arts colleges and universities for the number of its graduates receiving doctorates in the last decade.

Bucknell's additional assets include a \$667 million endowment, an operating budget of \$251 million, and a network of more than 50,000 alumni throughout the nation and the world. The 450-acre campus is among the most attractive in the country; most of its more than 100 facilities are described later in the catalog. Of particular note are the highly regarded Ellen Clarke Bertrand Library (1951), the handsome Weis Center for the Performing Arts (1988), the capacious Rooke Science Center (1991), the Weis Music Building (2000), the state-of-the-art Breakiron Engineering Building (2004) and the LEED-certified Academic West (2013).

The University provides comprehensive residential and student activities programs to support the educational mission and to promote personal growth and responsibility. Eighty-six percent of Bucknell students live on campus, enjoying options that include seven residential colleges. More than 150 student organizations create a wide range of cocurricular and extracurricular opportunity in the arts, media, community service, religion, and other areas. An active Greek system involves about half of the eligible (non-first-year) students.

Bucknell's athletics program is particularly rich and distinctive. Approximately one-fifth of all students participate in 27 varsity sports at the Division I level. Bucknell is a member of the Patriot League, whose member institutions share a commitment to the primacy of the academic experience. Bucknell has captured the Patriot League's all-sports championship in 18 of the 23 years contested, but is equally proud that its graduation rate for athletes – 91 percent in the latest four-year average – is annually among the highest in the nation. Bucknell is ranked #1 in the nation in student-athlete graduation rate.

The campus is bordered by the Susquehanna River and Lewisburg, a historic small town in scenic central Pennsylvania. Most of the mid-Atlantic region's major cities are within three- or four-hour drives, including New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, and Washington, D.C., and the University uses their resources on a regular basis. Still, the day-to-day life of faculty and students is clearly nonurban and nonsuburban, and the walk from downtown to the University among stately 19th-century homes, in the light of the borough's signature street lamps, evokes the sense of an earlier, calmer America. Lewisburg also is ranked among the nation's "most livable" small towns, on the basis of key resources such as health care, safety, and the economic base.