Undergraduate Admission

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Admission Philosophy

At Carnegie Mellon, we select our freshman class from a large group of very qualified candidates. We don’t use a calculation to arrive at our admitted class. Calculations can’t take into account all of the factors we consider when making admission decisions. No single grade, factor, score or activity will automatically gain or deny you admission to Carnegie Mellon. We treat every applicant as an individual and take great care to make our admission decisions fair, thorough, and sensitive. We’re interested in students who can be successful at Carnegie Mellon, while taking full advantage of all the university has to offer and enriching our campus community.

Admission Criteria

The majority of our applicants are admissible and could be successful at Carnegie Mellon. We use a variety of factors (https://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/admission-consideration) to select our first-year class from those admissible candidates.

Our admission process is designed to select a highly talented, diverse undergraduate population with high aspirations, who will succeed at Carnegie Mellon. If you’re applying to academic programs, your high school performance will be a significant factor in our admission decision because it’s the most meaningful indication of your motivation and abilities. We pay close attention to your curriculum rigor, the grades you’ve earned and the work you’ve accomplished. We’re interested in seeing that you’ve challenged yourself within your secondary school environment. If you’re applying to programs in the arts, your artistic performance will be either the main factor or a significant factor (depending on the program) in our admission decision.

Standardized test scores add to our knowledge of a student’s ability, but we don’t make decisions on the basis of test scores alone. The high school record and standardized test scores (SAT or ACT and, if applicable, recommended SAT Subject Tests) work together to make up the academic portion of a student’s evaluation.

Your non-academic activities, including extracurricular accomplishments, part-time jobs, hobbies and community service also play a very important role in the admission process. We also consider leadership, motivation, out-of-class recognition, community and volunteer service and other experiences when making admission decisions. Our students make Carnegie Mellon an exciting campus. The positive qualities and diverse experiences you bring with you will enrich our community. By looking at this non-academic information, we develop a sense of your personality, motivation and responsibility.

Because we want to have a sense of who the applicant is as a person, we look closely at your Common Application essay, your short essay questions, the secondary school counselor’s evaluation and the teacher’s recommendation.

We do not consider demonstrated interest in our admission paradigm. Demonstrated interest is a term used in undergraduate admission that describes the ways in which a prospective student shows a college that they’re interested by visiting campus and submitting additional materials that aren’t required in the application. As a result, we do not consider a campus visit or communication with the Office of Admission or other members of the Carnegie Mellon community when making admission decisions.


Different Criteria for Different Colleges

Each college/program at Carnegie Mellon has admission criteria specifically related to each course of study.

Admission to the Schools of Drama and Music is based primarily on a pre-screen, audition or portfolio review (http://cmu.edu/admission/finearts). Applicants to the Schools of Architecture, Art and Design will be evaluated not only on the basis of their portfolio review (http://cmu.edu/admission/finearts) but also on their academic performance.

Applicants to the College of Engineering, Mellon College of Science, and School of Computer Science will be evaluated on the basis of academic performance, and we’ll look additionally for strength in mathematics and science. Academic performance is also the main criteria we use to evaluate applicants to the Dietrich College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Information Systems program and Tepper School of Business undergraduate program. With these programs, we emphasize reading and comprehension abilities as well as mathematics courses.

Applicants should be aware of our admission requirements (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/admission) (secondary school preparation, standardized test requirements, nonacademic information, counselor, teacher and interview recommendations) when submitting applications.

Application Instructions

The following instructions are applicable to first-year, incoming undergraduate students. Graduate students should refer to the Graduate Education website (https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/admissions) for application instructions.

1. Applicants must apply online by completing the Common Application (http://www.commonapp.org) and submitting the $75 application fee. We require this fee of all applicants except in extenuating financial circumstances.

2. Request that your secondary school counselor submit all high school transcripts, including senior year courses, mid-year grades and a school profile to the Office of Admission (preferably online) as close to the deadline as possible. Visit our website (https://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/application-plans-deadlines) for Early and Regular Decision deadlines.

3. Apply for admission only to the specific college(s) or programs in which you’re interested.
   a. Rank your program and/or major preference; applicants may apply to a maximum of two colleges/programs. Applicants are typically considered for their highest preference academic program.
   b. If you’re applying to more than one college/program, there’s no need to submit multiple applications and no additional application fee. However, you should describe your interest in each program in your Carnegie Mellon essay.
   c. Be sure to review the academic requirements (https://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/academic-requirements) for each college/program.
   d. Early Decision and transfer candidates will only be considered for their first choice college/program.

4. If you’re applying to the College of Engineering, Dietrich College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Information Systems, Mellon College of Science, School of Computer Science, or Tepper School of Business, we strongly urge you to indicate a program and/or major preference at the time you apply. Although you might not declare a major until the end of your freshman or sophomore year, we do limit access to certain majors, such as electrical and computer engineering, computer science and business.

5. If you’re applying to the College of Fine Arts, you must apply specifically to one of the following schools: Architecture, Art, Design, Drama or Music. (See specific instructions to follow.)

6. If you’re applying to the School of Music, an additional pre-screen/ audition/portfolio review fee of $50 is required. If you’re applying to the School of Art, Architecture, or Design, an additional portfolio review fee of $15 is required. These fees must be paid at the time of registration (http://cmu.edu/admission/ finearts).

7. Take the SAT or ACT and recommended SAT Subject Tests, preferably by November but no later than December. Review our standardized test requirements (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/standardized-test-requirements) for more details.
   a. You must submit all official scores electronically through College Board, ACT or the Educational Testing Service (ETS). When you register for the test, request that an official score report be sent directly to Carnegie Mellon. Make sure your name, address and birthdate on your application matches the information used to register for these tests. The Carnegie Mellon code number is 2074.

8. The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is required if your native language is not English. Carnegie Mellon requires (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/standardized-test-requirements)
102 or higher on the iBT TOEFL, and an IELTS scores of 7.5 or above. Please arrange to have these scores sent by the appropriate deadline (https://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/application-plans-deadlines).

9. If you are applying to the College of Fine Arts, you must complete pre-screen, audition or portfolio review requirements (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/fine-arts-admission). The Schools of Art, Architecture, Design, Drama and Music require that students apply to the university before registering for a pre-screen, audition or portfolio review. There is no Early Decision consideration given for acting, directing, dramaturgy, music theater or the School of Music.

10. You must sign the “Confidentiality Statement” on the Common Application School Report Form and give it to your secondary school counselor for completion. Your counselor should return this form, along with the school profile and your transcript.

11. Choose a teacher to complete the Common Application Teacher Recommendation Form and make sure it is submitted to the Office of Admission by the application deadline (https://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/application-plans-deadlines).

12. Our Regular Decision application deadline is January 1. The Schools of Drama and Music’s Regular Decision deadline is December 1.

13. If you are applying for financial aid, please visit the Applying for Aid section of our website (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/applying-for-aid). We require financial aid applicants to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) (http://www.fafsa.gov). Carnegie Mellon’s federal code is 003242. You must also complete the CSS PROFILE (https://profileonline.collegeboard.com) and submit signed copies of parent and student tax documents.

### Application Notification

- Students applying under the Early Decision Plan will be notified of our decision no later than December 15.
- Students applying under the Regular Decision Plan will be notified of our decisions no later than April 15.
- Students who are applying for financial aid will also receive financial aid decisions no later than April 15.

If you are offered admission and wish to enroll at Carnegie Mellon, you are required to pay an $800 non-refundable enrollment deposit by May 1 in order to reserve your place in the freshman class and in university housing. This deposit will be credited to your first semester’s charges. The admission staff assumes that a student’s deposit to Carnegie Mellon is their only deposit. We reserve the right to cancel our offer of admission if a student also posts a tuition deposit at another university. During the summer, information concerning registration, enrollment, insurance, orientation, housing and dining services, etc., will be communicated to all incoming students.

### Deferred Admission

If you are admitted to Carnegie Mellon and wish to defer your admission for one year, you must submit a written request to the Office of Admission. If permission is granted, your enrollment deposit must be paid in order to confirm enrollment for the following year. You cannot enroll in a degree program at another institution in the interim.

### Application Plans

**Regular Decision Plan** (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/application-plans-deadlines)

Regular Decision is our most popular application option. The deadline is January 1 (December 1 for Drama and Music applicants). You will be notified of your decision no later than April 15. Admitted students will have until May 1 to accept our offer of admission.

**Early Admission** (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/application-plans-deadlines)

Through the process of Early Admission, the university admits certain highly qualified applicants at the end of their junior year in high school. In general, Early Admission candidates are highly mature and responsible students who have usually exhausted the courses offered at their high schools without receiving a high school diploma. Early Admission applicants must follow the same procedures as regular freshman applicants. We also strongly encourage these applicants to have a discussion with a member of the Office of Admission staff. It’s important to note that the College of Fine Arts very rarely accepts Early Admission applicants.

### Transfer Applicants

Transfer students are admitted to Carnegie Mellon under policies that vary from college to college (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/transfer-admission). If there is space in the requested program, we’ll base our decision on your college grades, college recommendations, high school grades and test scores (SAT or ACT and SAT Subject Tests, if previously taken). In the College of Fine Arts, most transfer applicants compete with freshman applicants for a place in the entering class and are required to complete a pre-screen, audition or portfolio review (http://cmu.edu/admission/finearts).

### Transfer Application Instructions

1. Apply for admission to your specific college of interest, noting departmental preference if applicable. Transfer students will only be considered for one college.

   **Engineering, DC, IS, MCS, SCS or Tepper:**
   - Fall transfer possible if space is available
   - Spring transfer is extremely limited due to space constraints
   - No external transfers accepted into BHA/BSA/BCSA

   **CFA:**
   - Only fall transfer is available for fine arts applicants
   - Transfer applicants are considered alongside freshman applicants and are likely to be given first-year status
   - No external transfers accepted into BHA/BSA/BCSA

2. A $75 application fee is required.

3. Send all secondary/high school and college/university transcripts to the Office of Admission. We also require a copy of course descriptions when completing your application. If you are applying to the College of Fine Arts, you must also complete the Transfer Application Instructions (http://cmu.edu/admission/finearts) by the appropriate fine arts application deadline.

4. If you are applying to the College of Fine Arts, you must complete any pre-screen, portfolio or audition requirements (http://cmu.edu/admission/finearts) by the appropriate fine arts application deadline.

5. A recommendation from a professor or advisor should be submitted in place of a college counselor recommendation. The College Report (a Common Application form) is also required from your current academic institution. This form should be completed by your college/university registrar or appropriate dean/college official who can verify your enrollment and academic standing.

6. Transfer application deadlines are as follows:
   - Spring transfer: October 15
   - Fall transfer: February 15 (December 1 for performing arts, January 1 for visual arts)

7. If you are applying for financial aid, please visit the Applying for Aid (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/applying-for-aid) section of our website. We require financial aid applicants to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) (http://www.fafsa.gov). Carnegie Mellon’s federal code is 003242. You must also complete
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Advanced Placement Consideration

Advanced Placement Program
Carnegie Mellon recognizes the Advanced Placement program and may grant advanced placement and credit for test scores of four or five (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/standardized-test-requirements). We encourage eligible students to take the AP examinations. We will receive the test scores in early summer for those students who have requested that their results be sent to Carnegie Mellon. The appropriate academic deans will evaluate your scores, and in late summer, you will be informed of the AP credit awarded.

College Level Course Work
The university may also award placement and credit for college work completed during high school. Applicants who have taken college courses should arrange to have their college transcripts along with course catalogs or descriptions sent to the Carnegie Mellon Office of Admission for transfer credit evaluation and advanced placement.

International Baccalaureate Program
Carnegie Mellon also recognizes the International Baccalaureate Examination and may grant advanced standing and/or credit in various fields if scores on the higher level examination range from six and seven. (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/standardized-test-requirements) The results of the IB exams should be sent to Carnegie Mellon, where the appropriate dean will evaluate the scores. In late summer, you will be notified of the credit that has been awarded.

Cambridge General Certificate of Education
Carnegie Mellon recognizes the Cambridge GCE A-Level (advanced level) examinations in various higher-level subjects and may grant advanced placement and/or credit for exemplary grades (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/standardized-test-requirements). Please note that we don't accept GCE "O" level examinations for placement.

BXA Intercollege Degree Programs
The BXA programs are intercollege degree-granting programs designed for students who'd like to combine and blend their interests in the fine arts and one of the following academic areas: computer science (BCSA), humanities/social sciences (BHA), natural sciences/mathematics (BSA). To apply for a BXA program, select the College of Fine Arts school you wish to apply for and then you'll be asked if you'd like to be considered for a BXA program.

Bachelor of Computer Science and Arts (BCSA)
To be considered for the BCSA program, you must apply and be admitted to both CFA and SCS (you must select a CFA school and SCS major on the Common Application). This program is not open to design, music theater, or acting majors. Not all students admitted to both colleges are selected for the BCSA program.

Bachelor of Humanities and Arts (BHA)
To be considered for the BHA program, a student must apply and be admitted to both CFA and DC (you must select a CFA school and DC major on the Common Application). This program is not open to design, music...
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Student Majors

Theater or acting majors. Not all students admitted to both colleges are selected for the BHA program.

Bachelor of Science and Arts (BSA)

To be considered for the BSA program, a student must apply and be admitted to both CFA and MCS (you must select a CFA school and MCS major on the Common Application). This program is not open to design, music theater, or acting majors. Not all students admitted to both colleges are selected for the BSA program.

In your accompanying application essay, please describe your interdisciplinary goals in both areas and how the BXA program would provide the opportunity and framework for you to accomplish these objectives. This essay is a central component in the selection process. You do not need to complete another essay. If you are selected for this program, you will be notified in your admission decision letter. These programs are not available for external transfers; selected program options are not available under Early Decision.

College of Fine Arts Requirements

Detailed information may be found on the Office of Admission website (http://cmu.edu/admission/finearts).

Deadlines

- Early Decision applicants must submit a complete application, including any required artistic evaluation, by November 1.
- Regular Decision applicants to Drama and Music must apply and make all pre-screen, audition or portfolio review reservations (http://cmu.edu/admission/finearts) by December 1.
- Regular Decision applicants to Art, Architecture and Design must apply by January 1 and submit their portfolio (http://cmu.edu/admission/finearts) no later than January 15.
- We recommend that you apply for admission as early as possible in order to register for a pre-screen, audition or portfolio review (http://cmu.edu/admission/finearts), which fill on a first-come, first-served basis.

Communication of Information and Admissions Decisions

- Final admission decisions are not made at the time of your audition or portfolio review. We will consider the artistic evaluation as part of your application along with your other credentials and notify you of your admission decision no later than April 15 (December 15 for Early Decision applicants).

Visit our fine arts admission procedures website (http://cmu.edu/admission/finearts) for details regarding the specific requirements for fine arts auditions and portfolio reviews.

Exploring Carnegie Mellon

Visiting a campus is one of the best ways for you to discover which school is right for you. You are welcome to attend an information session or admission counseling session (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/visit) while on campus.

Campus Tours

Campus tours (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/visit) are conducted by Andrew Ambassadors. We offer tours most weekdays and weekends during the academic year.

Hometown Counseling Sessions

We realize that it’s not always possible for you to come to campus. The Admission staff does travel to different parts of the country and may offer Admission Counseling Sessions in your hometown (https://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/visit-carnegie-mellon-in-a-city-near-you).

Turn Tartan Overnight Weekends

The more information you have, the better decisions about college you’ll make! The Admission staff invites you to learn more about Carnegie Mellon by living like a university student for a day and a half in our Turn Tartan Overnight (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/turn-tartan-overnight) program. Visits begin on Sunday morning and last through Monday afternoon.

Information Sessions

The Office of Admission offers information sessions (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/visit) throughout the year, both on and off campus. The session offers an experiential look at the university through student and faculty stories. You’ll have the opportunity to learn more about Carnegie Mellon’s areas of study, admission, financial aid, and the city of Pittsburgh.

Contact Carnegie Mellon for Assistance

If a student will need assistance while visiting the campus, due to a physical or learning disability, they should contact us at admission@andrew.cmu.edu or 412-268-2082, and we will help meet the student’s needs during his/her visit at Carnegie Mellon.

Getting to Campus

Plan your visit to Carnegie Mellon using our Maps & Directions webpage (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/maps-directions). We also provide information on Travel and Accommodations (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/pre-college) to assist you in your planning.

Summer Pre-College Programs

Our Summer Pre-College Programs (https://www.cmu.edu/student-affairs/pre-college) are designed to preview an actual college experience. Our programs afford high school students many opportunities for personal growth and development within a university setting. A wide range of social, cultural, and recreational activities are planned by a staff of resident counselors to fully integrate the students’ lives on campus and in Pittsburgh.

Movies, dances, museum and gallery visits, field excursions or attendance at professional theater productions, concerts, and Pittsburgh Pirates games are just a few of the sponsored activities. Please visit the Office of Admission Pre-College website (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/pre-college) for information about applying to the program.

Summer Academy for Mathematics and Science

(http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/summers-programs-for-diversity)

Students from underserved and underrepresented backgrounds who are entering their senior year and considering careers in computer science, engineering, science and other math-based disciplines are eligible to participate in this rigorous program. Traditional classroom instruction, along with creative “hands-on” projects will allow students to apply concepts and principles.

Advanced Placement Early Admission Program

(http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/pre-college)

The main purpose of the Advanced Placement Early Admission (AP/EA) Program is to provide the opportunity to take university courses at Carnegie Mellon for talented, motivated high school students. Students earn college credit while working in an academic environment mirroring that which the student would encounter during the first year of college.

Students who complete two courses in the AP/EA Program and who can graduate early from high school have the unique opportunity to apply Early Admission. All AP/EA students may also apply to Carnegie Mellon during their senior year, through Early Decision or Regular Decision.

Regardless of whether students choose to apply to Carnegie Mellon, successful AP/EA students can leverage their experiences here as demonstration of their ability to succeed in college. AP/EA courses are college courses, not AP classes, and as such they count toward graduation requirements here and are widely accepted elsewhere. Students applying to another college or university can request an official Carnegie Mellon transcript be sent to that institution. Any use of AP/EA courses to satisfy high school requirements should be approved ahead of time by an appropriate high school official.

Pre-College Architecture Program

(http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/pre-college-architecture)

The study of architecture is an exciting multidisciplinary activity that combines design creativity, historical perspective, technical excellence, social responsibility, and global and environmental leadership. The Pre-College Architecture Program is structured to introduce you to each of these areas and for you to experience studying architecture in a university setting.
Pre-College Art Program (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/pre-college-art)
The Summer Pre-College Art program motivates, stimulates, and prepares you as an emerging artist. Exploring traditional tools and new technologies in a variety of media leads you to develop conceptual and technical skills, excellent preparation for applying to and succeeding in a competitive college-level art program. You’ll be introduced to the spirit and substance of the Carnegie Mellon School of Art culture through challenging courses, critique, stimulating workshops, portfolio development, and energetic interaction with dedicated faculty and talented peers.

Pre-College Design Program (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/pre-college-design)
Designers help create the artifacts and environments of our everyday experiences. Designers are responsible for creating the things we interact with – from software applications, to magazines and books, to automobiles, to toothbrushes. Beyond products and communications, some designers are now responsible for re-thinking the environments that we live and work in, from retail spaces to the studios of the future. Over six weeks, the Pre-College Design program provides core experiences in the communication, product, and environment design processes led by experienced design faculty and design practitioners.

Pre-College Drama Program (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/pre-college-drama)
The Pre-College program in Drama allows talented high school students to experience professional theater training. The program provides an opportunity for aspiring artists to experience the rigorous demands of college-level theater programs options, including Acting, Music Theater, and Design/Production.

Pre-College Music Program (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/pre-college-music)
The summer Pre-College Music program offers a unique view of the life of a music student at Carnegie Mellon in a supportive environment of study and performance. It is an ideal opportunity to experience a world-class conservatory program and discover your potential for a career in music. Coupled with the rich cultural life of the city of Pittsburgh and varied campus activities, the summer Pre-College Music program is an extraordinary way for young musicians to spend their summer.

National High School Game Academy (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/pre-college-nhsga)
The National High School Game Academy (NHSGA) explores the video game industry and the skills needed to be successful in it. The program includes an exciting blend of hands-on exercises combined with traditional lecture and discussion. Students are encouraged to expand their own creative possibilities in a unique blend of left- and right-brain college-level work.