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 like to 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 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 Test or ACT Test 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 the essay and personal statement you're asked to write, the secondary school counselor’s evaluation and the teacher’s recommendation.

We are eliminating demonstrated interest as a consideration in our admission paradigm. We no longer accept supplementary submission of materials, including resumes, research abstracts, writing samples, multimedia demonstrations of talent, and maker portfolios. Going forward, we no longer offer alumni interviews in advance of admission decisions and are refocusing alumni efforts to connect with admitted candidates instead. Our on-campus interviews are no longer evaluative, but rather are counseling sessions to help students align their interests with our programs. We have changed our long application essay to a series of short essays, to better understand student context, unique talents and interests, as well as special considerations that candidates would like to bring to our attention.

There are a number of other ways to show interest and learn more about Carnegie Mellon. Students can come to one of our Turn Tartan Overnights (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/tum-tartan-overnight), attend an information session in or near their hometown (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/information-sessions-in-a-city-near-you), interview in their hometown (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/visit-carnegie-mellon-in-a-city-near-you) with one of our staff members or alumni, or enroll in one of our summer programs for high school students (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/pre-college). Information about these events is included at the end of this section.

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://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/fine-arts-admissions). Applicants to the Schools of Architecture, Art and Design will be evaluated not only on the basis of their portfolio review (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/fine-arts-admission) 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 family 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 January 1 as possible.
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 in your Carnegie Mellon essay.
   c. Be sure to meet the admission requirements for each college/program.
4. Early Decision and transfer candidates will only be considered for their first choice college/program.
5. 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.
6. 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.)
7. 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 Drama, an additional pre-screen/audition/portfolio review fee is $115 is required. These fees must be paid at the time of registration (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/fine-arts-admission).
8. Take the SAT or ACT Test 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
10. Decision, you are required to withdraw all admission applications to other Early Decision applications are due November 1 and students will be notified to withdraw your applications from other schools. Early Decision is available in a binding agreement to enroll at Carnegie Mellon. Under the Early decision early in their senior year. If you're accepted Early Decision, you're Under this plan, applicants are notified of our admission If Carnegie Mellon is your first choice, you may want to consider applying Early Decision. Under this plan, applicants are notified of our admission if previously taken). In the College of Fine Arts, most transfer applicants are required to complete a pre-screen, portfolio or audition 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 personal interview 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. 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 our decision by April 15. Admitted students will have until May 1 (Candidate’s General Reply Date) to accept our offer of admission. Early Admission
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Deferred Admission
If you are admitted to Carnegie Mellon and wish to defer your admission for one year, you must submit a request in writing 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
Early Decision Plan
If Carnegie Mellon is your first choice, you may want to consider applying Early Decision. Under this plan, applicants are notified of our admission decision early in their senior year. If you’re accepted Early Decision, you’re in a binding agreement to enroll at Carnegie Mellon. Under the Early Decision plan, we encourage you to submit non-binding applications to other schools. However, if you are accepted to Carnegie Mellon, we require you to withdraw all applications from other schools. Early Decision is available to all programs, with the exception of acting, directing, dramaturgy, music theater, and the School of Music.

Early Decision applications are due November 1 and students will be notified of an admission decision by December 15. If you are admitted under Early Decision, you are required to withdraw all admission applications to other colleges or universities and post a non-refundable enrollment deposit of $800 by February 1.

Regular Decision Plan
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 our decision by April 15. Admitted students will have until May 1 (Candidate’s General Reply Date) to accept our offer of admission.

Application Notification
- Students applying under the Early Decision Plan will be notified of our decision by December 15.
- Students applying under the Regular Decision Plan will be notified of our decisions by April 15.
- Students who are applying for financial aid will also receive financial aid decisions by April 15 provided they submitted their financial aid forms by the February 15 financial aid deadline.

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 (Candidates General Reply Date) 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 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 students.

Deferred Admission
If you are admitted to Carnegie Mellon and wish to defer your admission for one year, you must submit a request in writing 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.

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Standing is awarded based on review of previous college courses. Transfer students in CFA to assume freshman status. Occasionally advanced placement and/or credit for exemplary grades or descriptions sent to the Carnegie Mellon Office of Admission for transfer credit evaluation and approval. The university may also award placement and credit for college work completed at previously attended institutions.

Deposit Information for Transfers

Carnegie Mellon does not require a tuition deposit (due to the short time interval between December 15 and the start of the spring semester). If you are offered admission in early January, you should complete the online housing application and submit your tuition deposit as soon as possible. If you are offered admission after the deadline, you may still have to complete the online housing application and submit your tuition deposit.

If you are offered admission for the spring semester, Carnegie Mellon assumes that you will be attending the university for the spring semester. If you are offered admission for the fall semester, you must complete the online housing application and submit your tuition deposit as soon as possible. If you are offered admission after the deadline, you may still have to complete the online housing application and submit your tuition deposit.

University Housing for Transfers

Carnegie Mellon expects to accommodate most transfer students who request university housing, but it is not guaranteed. The Off-campus Housing Advisory and Referral Service is available to help you locate housing accommodations in the local area.

Transfer Credit Evaluated on Individual Basis

Carnegie Mellon's departmental faculty will determine transfer credit for courses you've taken at other universities. Transfer credit is considered on an individual basis. We may award elective credit for courses which are equivalent to Carnegie Mellon courses. In some instances, the College Council may recommend a special program of study for you to meet the university's graduation requirements.

Transfer credit for courses you are taking while you review your existing college record depends upon successful completion of each course. Grades are not transferred - only credit is. You may receive transfer credit for elective courses that you have taken but will still have to take Carnegie Mellon courses to fulfill the elective space in your chosen degree program. Sometimes transfer students have to take specific courses and accumulate a larger total number of credits than the normal amount required for graduation. The time it takes for you to graduate will depend on the time you need to complete the full university degree requirements, not on class standing at a previous institution.

If you transfer into Engineering, IS, MCS, SCS or Tepper in the Fall semester, you will receive an estimate of the additional academic work that you must complete in order to fulfill the university degree requirements. If you transfer into Engineering, IS, MC, or SCS in the Spring semester, you will have the opportunity to meet with a dean or department head in order to outline the additional academic work that you must complete in order to meet the university degree requirements. If you transfer into DC in the Fall semester, you will receive a credit and requirement review of the work you've completed at your previous institution(s). It is best for transfer students in CFA to assume freshman status. Occasionally advanced standing is awarded based on review of previous college courses.

Application as an International Student

International students should apply to Carnegie Mellon using the same procedures outlined for either freshmen or transfer students. Also note this additional information (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/undergraduate-international-students):

- Carnegie Mellon does not offer financial aid or installment plans to international students. International students are not eligible for application fee waivers.
- If your native language is not English, you are required (https://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/international-admission-requirements) to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). Carnegie Mellon requires 102 or higher on the IB TOEFL or an IELTS score of 7.5 and above. Please arrange to have these scores sent no later than January 1.
- InitialView interviews are recommended for nonnative English speakers but are not required. Oftentimes these interviews can measure readiness for engagement in the classroom and also showcase a student’s personality, likes and dislikes, as well as the area of intended major. InitialView interviews can show English language proficiency while also corroborating the application with more details about the student.

Advanced Placement Consideration

Advanced Placement Program

Carnegie Mellon recognizes the Advanced Placement program and may grant advanced standing 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 college 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

Bachelor of Computer Science and Arts (BCSA)

The Bachelor of Computer Science and Arts (BCSA) Program is an intercollege degree-granting program. It's designed for students who would like to combine their interests in the fine arts and computer science rather than pursue a conventional major and degree in either the College of Fine Arts or the School of Computer Science. 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)
The Bachelor of Humanities and Arts (BHA) program is an intercollege degree-granting program. It’s designed for students who would like to combine and blend their interests in fine arts and humanities/social sciences rather than pursue a conventional major and degree in either the College of Fine Arts (CFA) or the Dietrich College of Humanities and Social Sciences (DC). 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 theater, or acting majors. Not all students admitted to both colleges are selected for the BHA program.

Bachelor of Science and Arts (BSA)
The Bachelor of Science and Arts (BSA) program is an intercollege degree-granting program. It’s designed for students who would like to combine studies in both the fine arts and natural sciences/mathematics rather than pursue a conventional major and degree in either the College of Fine Arts (CFA) or the Mellon College of Science (MCS). 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 BSA 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 Undergraduate Admission website (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/fine-arts-admission).

Deadlines
- Early Decision applicants must submit a complete admission application, including any required artistic evaluation, by November 1.
- Regular Decision applicants must submit a complete admission application by January 1 (or December 1 if applying to drama or music) and all pre-screen, audition or portfolio review reservations (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/fine-arts-admission) should be made before this date.
- We recommend that you apply for admission as early as possible in order to register for a pre-screen, audition or portfolio review (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/fine-arts-admission), 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 by April 15 (December 15 for Early Decision applicants).

Visit our fine arts admission procedures website (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/fine-arts-admission) 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.

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/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, he/she 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/pittsburgh-travel-accommodations) to assist you in your planning.

Summer Pre-College Programs
Our Summer Pre-College Programs (http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/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.

Summer Academy for Mathematics and Science
(http://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu/pages/summer-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](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](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](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](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](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](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.