

students review

The Students Review series is intended to aid prospective college students in their search by offering insiders' views of selected colleges and universities, as expressed by current undergraduates or recent graduates who have high academic ability. Note that the number of reviewers is small. Consider their personal perspectives as only one factor as you gather information and impressions from many sources.

Our reviewers include 45 students, who major(ed) in applied mathematics (1), biology (3), biomedical engineering (2), chemical & biomolecular engineering (2), chemistry (2), civil engineering (1), computer science (1), economics (4), electrical engineering (2), English (1), entrepreneurship & management (1), film & media studies (1), geography (1), history (2), history of science (1), humanities (1), international relations (3), Latin American studies (1), materials science & engineering (1), math (7), mechanical engineering (2), music (3), philosophy (1), physics (2), psychology (4), public health studies (2), voice (1), and writing seminars (5). (The number of majors exceeds 45 because several students had double majors.) Reviewers' comments appear within quotation marks.

Quality of Academic Instruction for Undergraduates

Reviewers praised the caliber of the faculty and the education JHU offers, and the many opportunities for undergraduate research.

→ "Excellent. Academically, JHU is tops for preparing students to think critically, study efficiently, and balance time. Classes are taught at a very high level. I was much more than adequately prepared for medical school."

→ "The instructors are of the highest caliber and are usually fairly accessible, especially in upper level courses. An undergraduate at JHU can learn from world-renowned faculty in departments as diverse as biomedical engineering, international relations, and writing. Research is strongly encouraged and opportunities are plentiful."



→ "Hopkins is intense. The courses are demanding, the students are smart and serious, and the workload is heavy. Students routinely take 15-18 credit hours (5-6 courses) per semester. The absence of a core curriculum underscores JHU's emphasis on self-motivated education. You can also design your own interdepartmental studies program."

→ "There's no core curriculum—just very flexible distribution requirements. This made me feel like JHU respected me as an individual learner. As an engineer, I had to take a certain number of humanities courses, but I got to choose ones I wanted to take, such as Art, Science, and Medicine in the Age of Leonardo da Vinci; Seven Modern Wonders of the World; and Science and Religion. I also took music composition courses at Peabody Conservatory. Where else can you get a world-class education in engineering and music?"

→ "The public health studies major is an excellent alternative to a typical pre-med education. It's very interesting and provides a fresh perspective on world health problems. And as seniors, all PHS majors take graduate courses at Hopkins' world-famous Bloomberg School of Public Health."

→ "JHU offers great opportunities to pursue music and dance through cross-registration at Peabody Conservatory. My courses

at Peabody have stretched my musical horizons, and the JHU shuttle makes it easy to move between the undergraduate and Peabody campuses."

Social Life

For the first two years, all students live on campus, while for the last two years, most students live just off campus. Reviewers value the friends they made.

→ "The campus is lovely (the magnolia trees in spring!), and even though it is within Baltimore City limits, it has a real campus feel. The social life is good. For freshmen, it tends to center around the dorms. The friendships formed there often last all four years. There are over 300 clubs and organizations that students can become involved in, including a number of Greek organizations, but no one type of activity dominates the social life at Hopkins."

→ "JHU is not an athletic powerhouse, with one giant exception: lacrosse. The team is one of the best in the country and enjoys a lot of support from the student body. Many students end up going to a game at some point or another, which makes a healthy counter-balance to the emphasis on academics and hard work."

→ "Students at Hopkins take their studies very seriously. Many JHU students know what they want out of life, and they are actively pursuing their dreams. JHU is not a party school; there are parties if you want to find them, but you can also have a great time without feeling pressured to go to parties. You don't have to join a fraternity or sorority to fit in. It was easy to find other students who enjoyed the more cultural experiences that I enjoy (foreign films, lectures by Nobel Laureates and ambassadors, learning new languages, etc.)."

→ "I made the best friends of my life at Hopkins. As we chatted over meals, whispered for hours at a time in the library, and talked and laughed late into the night in the dorms, I was constantly impressed with

the intelligence, dedication, widespread interests, and accomplishments of my classmates and friends."

→ "It's really up to you. The students are great, the campus is beautiful, and Baltimore has a lot to offer if you take the initiative to explore it. And Washington is just an hour away!"

→ "Baltimore is no New York City, but there is plenty to do and see, although public transportation is limited. I enjoyed the museums, seeing the Orioles play, and exploring the different neighborhoods around town. I was fortunate because I had access to a car, which made exploring the city and venturing to Washington, DC, much easier."

What Do You Like Best about JHU?

→ "Excellent academics, diverse students, and a small liberal arts college atmosphere at a major university made Hopkins a great experience."

→ "I like the strong intellectual and competitive academic atmosphere at Hopkins. It keeps me motivated in my class work, and talking with my friends and professors after classes is truly exciting and often inspiring."

→ "The many opportunities to do research with outstanding people. The research and volunteer opportunities at the Medical School and School of Public Health are truly impressive. If you are assertive, you can really do a lot and get invaluable help and advice as you formulate your future plans."

→ "My professors were extremely supportive and let me do things I might not have been able to do at other institutions. I was allowed to overload in courses every semester (in many other institutions, you would have to pay extra per credit). Because of that, I was able to double major, do a senior thesis, and finish a master's degree in four years at Hopkins."

What Do You Like Least about JHU?

→ "There is a lot of pressure academically, which doesn't leave much time to think



Johns Hopkins University
Baltimore, MD 21218
www.jhu.edu

- 4-year coed private university
- Campus lies between urban and suburban neighborhoods.
- Full-time undergraduate enrollment 2009-10: 2,625 men; 2,328 women.
- Special features: Space Telescope Science Institute, Peabody Conservatory. Undergraduates may take courses at JHU's School of Public Health.

about what one really enjoys doing or wants to do. Freshman advising was also extremely unhelpful."

→ "It seems like only students who really know what they want thrive at JHU. Advising is good for pre-medical students, but it's easy for others to fall through the cracks."

→ "The workload gets people down a lot. Also, the surrounding neighborhood isn't the safest. Even if you practice street smarts, there's always a chance of danger."

Who Would Be Most Compatible with the Academic and Social Atmosphere at JHU?

Reviewers agree that, while many kinds of people find a niche at JHU, the student most compatible with the demands of the place is one who can handle stress and a heavy workload and is very focused on his or her academic goals.

→ "Someone whose first priority is learning. This isn't to say that you'll be stuck in the library all four years. There is fun to be had at Hopkins, but it is a serious campus."

→ "Someone who knows what they want out of their education and can go after it."
→ "Someone who is strongly academically motivated, does not give up in tough situations, can handle peer pressure, has a good sense of humor about his/her shortcomings, and does not need regular sleep. Being a born prodigy would help..."

If You Had It to Do Again, Would You Go to JHU?

Twenty-seven reviewers said yes; the remainder had mixed feelings.

→ "Absolutely! I had the chance to study something in which I was really interested, to meet fascinating, driven, motivated people, and to explore my personal interests."

→ "Definitely. My last two years at JHU were the most productive, exciting, and interesting years of my life! My first two years, I was too overwhelmed to fully appreciate the amazing opportunities that surrounded me, from visiting lecturers of international acclaim to hands-on projects where my work was actually useful. Now, I wish I could go back and take full advantage of all four years."

→ "Definitely. It certainly wasn't a walk in the park; there were many times when I doubted the wisdom of my decision to attend JHU. JHU does not baby you, but it does prepare you for the real world—something I can attest to now that I'm in it. Just as importantly, I met people who will be my lifelong friends."

→ "Yes. Sometimes I wished Hopkins had more school spirit and the athletics of a Division I school, but the mix of academics, research, and student body size were just what I was looking for."

→ "I can't imagine having a better academic experience at any other university, but I might choose a larger university or one with more of a sense of community." **i**

Note: *The reviewers quoted in the Students Review series are expressing their own views, which are not necessarily those of JHU or CTY.*