

## College Spotlight: Gonzaga University

Today we are going to head to the Pacific Northwest, to Spokane, Washington and Gonzaga University. Gonzaga is a private, Catholic (Jesuit) school that is probably best known for its basketball program, but Gonzaga has a lot to offer its students and is well worth a look. One does not need to be Catholic to attend, and other than a two of religion classes that are required as part of the core curriculum, there are no requirements for church attendance.

Spokane is about 450 miles east of Seattle, quite close to the Idaho border, along the Spokane River. Outdoor enthusiasts will enjoy recreational activities like fishing and hiking in the nearby Rocky foothills. The school is located right in town, with the basketball arena as a focal point. It is a really lovely campus with a unique mix of traditional brick building and state-of-the-art facilities. There is a wonderful “fly-over” tour one can view on the Gonzaga website that gives one a really good sense of the campus and where it is located.

At just over 5200 students, Gonzaga is considered a medium sized school. Fifty three percent of the student body identify as female and 47% as male. Fifty two percent of students are from out of state. Ninety-seven percent of freshman live on campus, with 51 percent of all students living on campus. There are ample off-campus housing opportunities in the near-by vicinity.

So, what about academics? Gonzaga offers a surprisingly wide variety of majors, minors, and concentrations for a school of its size. For the more musically inclined, one can even major in Conducting. There is an excellent Engineering program, as well as a Nursing program for the more STEM minded students, and just about 28% of students opt for their very strong business school and associated majors like Accounting. With a student/faculty ratio of 11:1, there are great opportunities for personal interaction with professors.

Gonzaga fields 8 men’s and 8 women’s Division I athletic teams. The Gonzaga Bulldogs, or more familiarly known as the Zags, are most known for their Men’s Basketball team. The Zags are frequently invited to the NCAA Big Dance each year, and in the past 20 years they have won the Maui Invitational twice and were runners up once. Watching the Zags hit the court during basketball season is a treat for students and local residents alike. In addition to the Varsity sports, there are plenty of opportunities to play club and intramural sports all throughout the year.

Applying to Gonzaga has been made a bit easier since COVID-19 helped them make the decisions to drop the mandatory SAT/ACT requirement. Students may submit scores if they wish, however, not submitting scores will not be viewed negatively. (My own suggestion regarding this is that if you think your scores will help you, then submit them, if not, don’t!) GPA’s, Activities, Leadership roles, and Volunteering will continue to play the largest part of the holistic review of all applications. Any applicant can have an interview if so desired, but they are strongly encouraged if one has a special circumstance to discuss, or a GPA lower than 3.2.

Gonzaga, like most private schools, is not inexpensive. However, the school reports that 98% of attendees are offered some form of financial aid. When a student applies, their application is automatically reviewed for Merit Scholarships (need blind) and there are loans and grants available when submitting a completed FAFSA. Tuition is at just over \$47,000 per year with room and board coming in right around \$13,000. These figures are not that far off of out of state public schools though, and public schools are not usually so generous with scholarships, so please take that into consideration.

If you are looking for a well-rounded, on the smaller side of medium sized school, Gonzaga really has a lot to offer and is well worth the time to take a look. Please check the school's website for visiting information if you are planning to head to the mainland for college visits. While some schools are opening up as COVID is fading into the rear-view mirror, the landscape is constantly changing.

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