

Admissions case study: Introduction

Welcome to the Otis-Witter College (OWC) admissions committee! OWC has seen more applicants than ever before. This year there are 10% more applications than last year, which means this will be the most competitive class to date. As a member of the admissions committee, you help choose who gets admitted. It's a tough job. The truth is, there are far more qualified applicants than there are spots left in this class.

OWC reviews applications holistically: the committee considers each aspect of the application before making a decision. Thoughtfully read the applications and take notes on the applicant review sheet. As a committee, you will review and discuss three OWC applicants. You must vote to admit one student application, waitlist one student application, and deny one student application.

Before you read the applications, familiarize yourself with the profile of Otis-Witter College. Think about the needs of OWC. What are the institutional priorities? When you review the applicants, pay attention to where they fit in OWC's profile. You represent OWC and should evaluate the applications in that context.

Personal information

Does the student have any background, family, or personal circumstances that should be taken into account when evaluating the application?

Transcript

How has the student performed academically over the years, and is there a noticeable trend in their grades? Has the student pursued advanced or rigorous coursework when available? What does their senior-year course load look like, and is it appropriately challenging? Do the student's courses align with their academic interests?

High school profile and school report

What information from the high school profile would be helpful to the admissions committee? Does the profile provide context that clarifies the student's academic opportunities and achievements?

Testing

Has the student submitted SAT or ACT scores? How do they compare with OWC's typical score ranges? How relevant do you believe test scores will be in the admission review? Do the scores align with the student's GPA? If provided, do AP/IB exam results or test subscores indicate strengths in specific academic areas?

Activities and experiences

What extracurricular activities has the student pursued in and out of school? What level of time commitment do they require? Has the student demonstrated leadership in these activities? Are there any personal circumstances that may have affected their involvement? How could the student's experiences enrich the OWC community?

Writing

Does the personal essay offer meaningful insight into the student beyond the transcript? Is the student's voice clear, and does the essay effectively convey who they are? Is the writing mechanically sound?



Otis-Witter College profile

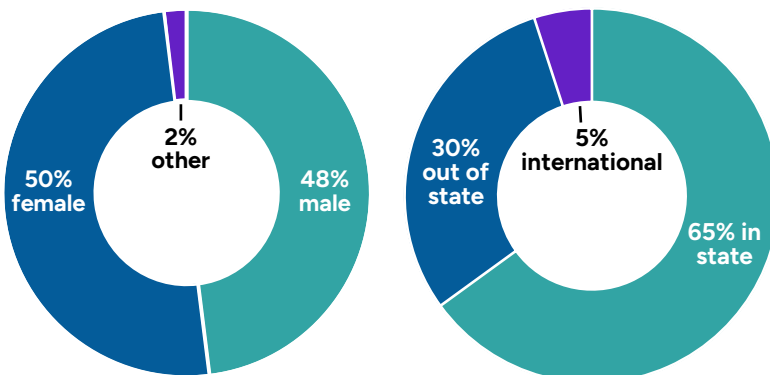
Est. 1869

About OWC

Otis-Witter College (OWC) is a private liberal arts and sciences institution located just outside of Philadelphia, PA. Our 2,500 students live and learn on this residential campus, creating a tight-knit sense of community. Known for strong pre-professional tracks for health professions and law, OWC's most popular majors are Biology and Political Science, which remain the most competitive majors for admission. In addition to the strong academic programs, OWC has also recently gained attention for the strength of its nationally ranked NCAA Division I Track & Field program.

OWC offers a one of a kind undergraduate experience where students build close connections with world renowned professors. Our location offers students access to a culturally vibrant city, a nearby international airport, and opportunities for experiential learning through robust internships and research.

OWC student body



Class of 2030 student profile

Applicants (as of June 1, 2025)

10,370
applicants

29%
admit rate

678
enrolled students

While not a requirement for admission, OWC does consider a student's demonstrated interest in their review process.

Middle 50% of applicants

1340-1470*
SAT

30-33*
ACT

3.6-4.0
GPA (unweighted 4.0 scale)

*OWC is test optional. 45% of admitted students did not submit test scores.

Financial aid

OWC meets 100% of demonstrated financial need

- Students receiving financial aid: 35%
- Target for student aid in the future: 40% of the incoming class

Otis-Witter College strategic plan

OWC strategic plan 2030: Reaching for the Moon Together

Otis-Witter College inaugurated a new president in 2024. With new leadership, OWC has implemented a multi-year strategic plan: Reaching for the Moon Together. By 2030, OWC has a vision to be a top 25 nationally ranked liberal arts university. To reach this vision, they have four strategic goals. Each goal is crucial for completing the strategic plan.

Goal 1: Increase alumni engagement

Alumni engagement is essential to OWC's strategic plan. The Alumni Relations office plans to increase alumni giving by 25%. This will be critical to reach fundraising numbers that will impact the development and success of all of the strategic goals.

Goal 2: Establish a nationally acclaimed pre-law program

Pre-law is a popular and successful program at OWC. OWC sees this program as their premier academic program that draws interested students from across the globe. OWC has started to invest resources to improve the academic facilities, hire prestigious faculty, and connect students to internships through community partnerships. OWC also plans to expand the program, and increase the number of students considering a law track by 10%.

Goal 3: Expand financial aid and education access

To reach for the moon, OWC knows they need to enroll a diverse class of students. OWC plans to increase the financial diversity of their campus community. Close to 35% of students at OWC receive financial aid to fund their education. With generous funding, OWC can meet full demonstrated need on a greater number students, making the educational experience attainable for more families. OWC has a goal to increase the percent of students who receive need-based aid to 40%.

Goal 4: Strengthen NCAA Division I Track & Field program

Athletic recruitment brings in about 25% of each incoming class. The Track and Field program at OWC has won two national titles in the past five years. The new president wants to strengthen this program with intentional recruitment of talented athletes.

Legal disclaimer: These case studies and related materials, including student profiles, applications, and college profiles (the "Materials") are fictional and created for educational and illustrative purposes only. The Materials were developed with the aid of Artificial Intelligence based on real student content shared with permission, which has been extensively anonymized and modified for privacy. They do not represent any specific real individuals, applications, or admissions decisions.