Why Cornell?

Cornell attracts researchers, thinkers, scholars, inventors, scientists, humanitarians, and thought leaders from around the world. A genuine sense of camaraderie—particularly between faculty and students—fosters collaborations and community, while supportive staff help guide students through their life at Cornell.

Engaged faculty

Interdisciplinary graduate field system

Historic commitment to inclusion

Scenic location, within reach of several major metropolitan areas

Programming to help you succeed, explore career options, and prepare for your future
Land Acknowledgment

Cornell University is located on the traditional homelands of the Gayogohó:no? (the Cayuga Nation). The Gayogohó:no? are members of the Hodinohsó:nïh Confederacy, an alliance of six sovereign Nations with a historic and contemporary presence on this land. The Confederacy precedes the establishment of Cornell University, New York state, and the United States of America. We acknowledge the painful history of Gayogohó:no? dispossession and honor the ongoing connection of Gayogohó:no? people, past and present, to these lands and waters.

This land acknowledgment has been reviewed and approved by the traditional Gayogohó:no? leadership.
About Us

Cornell is a privately endowed top tier research university located in upstate New York.

The main campus of Cornell University is in Ithaca, New York, which is located on the traditional homelands of the Gayogó:ňó? (the Cayuga Nation) who continue to steward their relationship with the lands and waters of the central New York region.

Ithaca is nestled in the heart of the Finger Lakes region, birthplace of the women’s rights movement and a center of activity for the Underground Railroad. A unique micro-urban college town, Ithaca is consistently rated as a top area to live, work and study. Collegetown and the Ithaca Commons are a short walk from campus, offering an array of shopping, restaurants, cultural activities, and nightlife.

Ithaca has an airport with service from several major air carriers, easily linking Cornell with the world.

Here’s how the cost of living in Ithaca compares to other college towns and cities in 2023:

Manhattan 143.6% higher
San Francisco 77% higher
Seattle 57.2% higher
Washington D.C. 52.8% higher
Boston 52.3% higher

“I fell in love with Ithaca from the moment I arrived! I am grateful that I can pursue my Ph.D. in such a beautiful place.”

Janine Comrie, doctoral student in nutrition from south Florida
Our Faculty

Praveen Sethupathy
Professor of Biomedical Sciences

Applying molecular and genome-scale approaches, Dr. Sethupathy's research seeks insight into normal physiology and the causes of disease, with a focus on diseases of the digestive system such as diabetes, Crohn’s, and fibrolamellar carcinoma.

Jamila Michener
Associate Professor of Government

Dr. Michener explores the ways public policy and political institutions shape the material and political lives of people who are economically and racially marginalized—and the ways that members of such groups gain power to affect policy.

Dr. Michener was named one of Vox’s Future Perfect 50 “scientists, thinkers, scholars, writers, and activists building a more perfect future.”

Cornell’s faculty are at the top of their fields:

President’s National Medal of Science recipients

Faculty memberships in the national academies
“Directly working with communities provides real social impact. Engagement is a rewarding experience on many levels – both academically and personally.”

K. Max Zhang

Ananda Cohen-Aponte
Associate Professor of History of Art
Dr. Cohen-Aponte’s research focuses on the visual culture of colonial Latin America, with special interests in issues of cross-cultural exchange, historicity, identity, and anti-colonial movements.

Neil Lewis, Jr.
Assistant Professor of Communication
Lewis’s research examines how people’s social contexts and identities influence how they make sense of the world around them and the implications of those meaning-making processes for their motivation to pursue a variety of goals in life.

K. Max Zhang
Professor of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering
Looking ahead to a low-carbon economy, Dr. Zhang and his team study sustainable energy systems, seeking ways we can transition to a reliable, secure, efficient, and clean power system.
Our Research

Cornell is one of the top research institutions in the world. Our outstanding research and teaching facilities include state-of-the-art buildings for life sciences, physical sciences, engineering, and art, architecture, and planning. Laboratories at Cornell foster research in sustainability, nanotechnology, energy, creativity, arts, social sciences, and human and animal health.

ONE of the 15 largest research libraries in North America

$1.18 Billion in research funding

150+ centers, institutes, laboratories, and programs

NO. 5 in NSF university research funding

60% of faculty serve in two or more graduate fields
Our Degree Options and Fields of Study

Our Graduate Field System
Cornell’s graduate field structure is cross-disciplinary by design, and truly unique. We offer more than 80 different fields of study, many of which rank in the top 10 nationally.

Most of our graduate faculty are affiliated with multiple fields, which is a unique strength of graduate education at Cornell. Research groups can be both interdisciplinary and cross disciplinary bringing together faculty and students from multiple graduate fields. This fosters and facilitates innovation, collaboration, and more diverse research endeavors.

Whether it’s applied economics, medieval studies, or nanotechnology, you can explore your passion at Cornell.

Graduate Research Degrees
For students in research degree programs, most fields have no core course requirements; instead, a faculty committee guides your work. Your special committee can be composed of faculty from different fields, colleges, and campuses, allowing you to build your own educational program around your academic interests.

- M.A. (Master of Arts)
- M.S. (Master of Science)
- M.A./Ph.D. or M.S./Ph.D. (joint Master’s/Doctor of Philosophy)
- Ph.D. (Doctor of Philosophy)

Research degrees with an original thesis or dissertation as part of the degree requirements.

- D.M.A. (Doctor of Musical Arts)
- J.S.D. (Doctor of Science of Law)
- M.F.A. (Master of Fine Arts)

Graduate School
Professional Degrees
Professional degrees prepare students to practice their profession at an advanced level, to teach the subject matter of their profession, or to pursue original investigations into its functions, administration, history, and progress.

For professional students, the focus is on coursework and a final project demonstrating what has been learned.

WHY I CHOSE CORNELL
“I was looking for a program that would give me the freedom to pursue intersectional research. The French literature program here encourages concentrations in minor fields, and I was drawn to the idea of a graduate minor in Feminist, Gender and Sexuality Studies. Cornell’s wide variety of courses and extensive library resources such as Borrow Direct also appealed to me as a humanities scholar.”

Sarena Tien,
a doctoral candidate in romance studies from Richmond, Virginia
Our Students

Cornell has a large graduate and professional student community:

**WHY I CHOSE CORNELL**

“I chose Cornell because the M.F.A. program allowed a great amount of latitude for me to take classes outside of my department but which may be relevant to my thesis. Moreover, the two year lectureship after the program is completed is one of a kind, offering wonderful teaching experience but also more time to focus on my creative work and utilize Cornell’s resources.”

**Michael Lee, M.F.A. ’22,**
Creative writing with a concentration in poetry from Minneapolis, Minnesota

“Beatrys Rodrigues,
a doctoral student in communication from São Paulo, Brazil

“I think the most crucial factor in my decision-making process was that I wanted to be in a collaborative and welcoming environment. I felt that during my visits to Cornell (even though they were virtual!). I believed that Cornell has an academic community that values interdisciplinarity and teamwork. Further, Cornell’s motto of ‘... any person ... any study’ truly resonated with my beliefs!”

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**STUDENT COMMUNITY**

3,707
Ph.D. students

631
research master’s students

1,483
professional master’s students
WHY I CHOSE CORNELL

“When it came down to deciding between NYU and Cornell, it was the sense of community Cornell offered that won me over. Cornell seemed not only interested in my potential for research and meaningful scholarship, but also in my person as a member of a larger academic community. Both Cornell and Ithaca have proven to offer precisely that.”

Elias Beltran, a doctoral candidate in comparative literature from the Bronx, New York

WHY I CHOSE CORNELL

“The Cornell and MBG community welcomed me and all the colors that I bring with me. As a queer South Asian scientist coming from the marginalized Dalit community, my scientific journey has not come without its challenges. In addition to providing an excellent niche for me to develop as a scientist, Cornell provided me with a community that shares my goals and nurtures my aspirations.”

Saket Bagde, a doctoral candidate in biochemistry, molecular and cell biology from Nagpur, India
In 1865, university co-founders Ezra Cornell and Andrew Dickson White were committed to creating a university that was open to all individuals, regardless of class, religion, nationality, race, or gender. As Ezra Cornell himself famously wrote, he envisioned Cornell as a university “where any person could find instruction in any study.”

Today, Cornell University continues to seek highly motivated and engaged students, both domestic and international, from across backgrounds. The Graduate School is committed to actively fostering an environment where the diverse perspectives, identities, and lived experiences of our students are recognized and valued. We prioritize providing pathways to graduate education and actively recruit, welcome, and support students from backgrounds historically underrepresented in academia.
Graduate School Student Demographics

11% Black, Hispanic/Latiné, and/or Indigenous (U.S.)

52% International (any race/ethnicity)

9% Asian or Asian-White (U.S.)

International students come to Cornell from 117 countries: U.S., China, India, Korea, Canada are the five top countries represented.

26% White (U.S.)

53% Female
What Cornell Offers You

Cornell provides personal and academic support for all facets of your student experience.

**Funding and Fellowships**

99.9% of Ph.D. students are fully funded to pursue their degrees through a combination of competitive internal and external fellowships, and research and teaching assistantships. Our base stipend rates for fellowships and assistantships are equivalent, consistent across graduate fields, and competitive with other top U.S. universities.

**Doctoral Student Funding Packages Include:**

- Stipend (12 month funding plans)
- Full tuition
- Health insurance

Roughly 250 students every year receive competitive external fellowships

705+ students every year receive competitive internal fellowships

**WHY I CHOSE CORNELL**

“Being a Graduate School Dean’s Scholar means that I know there is someone looking after me who cares about my academic success and about me holistically. It’s a community that not only strives to survive the graduate experience but also thrive.”

**Gustavo Alvarez,**

a doctoral candidate in mechanical engineering from San Bernardino, California
Resources to Help You Build Your Community

With almost \textbf{26,000} students across degree programs at Cornell, it’s important for all of our students to engage in activities that support their sense of community and belonging. The organizations, programs, and resources below are designed to bring people together and help them establish meaningful connections.

The Graduate School Office of Inclusion and Student Engagement (OISE) fosters environments where all scholars, especially those from backgrounds historically excluded from and underrepresented in the academy, can find community, experience positive mentoring relationships, and engage in professional, leadership, and academic development opportunities.

Learn more about the Graduate School’s Office of Inclusion and Student Engagement

The Big Red Barn is a central place where students can gather to socialize, eat, relax, and engage in a variety of programs. The Big Red Barn Graduate and Professional Student Center hosts more than 500 events including trivia night, study/writing breaks, cultural celebrations, and the ever-popular T.G.I.F. (Tell Grads It’s Friday) weekly happy hours.

Cornell’s area studies and research programs include:

- Africana Studies and Research Center
- American Indian and Indigenous Studies Program (AIISP)
- American Studies Program
- Asian American Studies Program
- Center for the Study of Inequality
- Disability Studies Program
- Feminist, Gender and Sexuality Studies Program (FGSS)
- Jewish Studies Program
- Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies
- Religious Studies Program
- The Latina/o Studies Program (LSP)
- The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Studies Program

The Office of the Dean of Students Identity-Based Centers & Offices comprises resource centers, advising units, and affinity groups that focus on identity development, student empowerment, support, and advocacy. The Dean of Students Office supports and empowers students from historically marginalized and underrepresented backgrounds while also providing all Cornell community members with opportunities to deepen their understanding of racial justice and equity, expand their allyship skills, engage in dialogue across difference, and be a part of the movement for positive social change.

- Asian & Asian American Center
- First Generation & Low-Income Student Support
- LGBT Resource Center
- Multicultural Student Leadership and Empowerment
- Office of Spirituality and Meaning-Making
- Undocumented & DACA Student Support
- Women’s Resource Center

All identity-based programs and resources are available to Cornell community members with the knowledge, related experience, and/or demonstrated commitment to contribute to the program’s objectives.

Learn more about the Dean of Students’ Office

Other resources

- English Language Support Office (ELSO)
- Office of Global Learning
Career and Professional Development Programs
Cornell offers programs and one-on-one advising to help you explore and prepare for your future career goals. Our staff are at the ready to help you achieve your goals.

Future Faculty and Academic Careers
Explore faculty roles and the academic job search process as you build skills such as teaching and research mentorship.

Careers Beyond Academia
Ph.D. students can “test drive” specific aspects of various careers through flexible, experiential, empowering opportunities.

Cornell Career Services
Access online resources and assessments, job postings, career fairs, workshops and advising on topics such as the international job search for graduate and professional students.

Entrepreneurship at Cornell
This university-wide program finds and fosters the entrepreneurial spirit in participants from every college, field, and stage of life.

600 Graduate School hour-long career consultations every year.

FUNDING FOR TRAVEL:
The Cornell Graduate School supports graduate student research and scholarship by offering research degree students the opportunity to travel the world for professional conferences, research, or immersive summer language education.
**Students with Families**

Whether you are an expectant student, student spouse, partner, significant student with a child(ren), Cornell recognizes that families are essential partners who encourage our student’s academic success and well-being. From our student-parent dependent care fund to job support for our student partners, Cornell provides resources and services to support student families.

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**The Graduate School Office of Student Life**

Graduate school is a fulfilling and rewarding experience, and sometimes challenging. It can be helpful to reach out to someone who understands. Staff from the Office of Student Life can provide valuable information and caring support to help you navigate to academic success. Their programs include:

**Advising by Office of Student Life Staff**

Our Student Life staff meet one on one with graduate and professional students to help them navigate topics ranging from academics to health and wellness to personal concerns.

**Graduate School Primer: Navigating Academia Workshop Series**

This seminar series offers first-year students information and skills to successfully transition into the role of a Cornell graduate or professional student.

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**Health and Wellness Resources**

The health and well-being of our students is a foundation for academic and life success.

- **Cornell Health** has a staff of over 220 medical, counseling, and related health care professionals who offer health care and a range of services to our diverse community.

- **Cornell Health Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)** provides individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, psychiatric care, and referral services.

- **Cornell Recreational Services** is home to five fitness centers located around campus, offering an extensive variety of cardio and weight equipment and over 95 group exercise classes each week.

- **Student Disability Services (SDS)** works in partnership with Cornell faculty, staff, and students to ensure that all aspects of student life are accessible, equitable, and inclusive of individuals with disabilities and are committed to working with every student to find appropriate and creative ways of ensuring access in every aspect of their Cornell experience.

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Where to Begin

Start here: [www.gradschool.cornell.edu](http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu)

**Explore**

Visit our Fields of Study page to learn more about our graduate fields and degree programs to determine which field(s) are the best fit for you.

Identify multiple faculty whose research aligns with your interests and consider reaching out to them as well as their current or former students.

- Begin thinking about the information you want to share in your application essays.
- Consider the academic and professional narrative you want to convey with your required academic statement of purpose.
- Consider the personal narrative you want to share via your required personal statement.

Cornell enrolls over 1,800 new graduate and professional students every year.
Prepare

- Write your academic statement of purpose and personal statement and edit for accuracy and effectiveness.
- Request required letters of recommendation.
- Prepare your transcripts.
- Check with your field to confirm application requirements and deadlines.
- For International Applicants:
  - Complete English language proficiency examination
  - Prepare international transcripts and degree equivalencies

Apply

- Give yourself plenty of time to complete the application.
- Understand important deadlines and policies.
- Upload all materials with your online application.
- Pay application fee (check website for fee waiver information).

Admissions Decisions

At Cornell, graduate admissions decisions are made by faculty in your proposed field of study. Application deadlines and additional requirements vary by field of study and degree program.

Faculty admissions committees take a holistic approach to the selection of students because they not only recognize a strong academic fit, they also value you as a whole person and consider the diversity of lived experiences and identities represented within our graduate community as a critical asset to graduate education at Cornell.

We want you to consider the Cornell University Graduate School for the next step in your educational career.

APPLICATION FEE WAIVERS

Cornell grants fee waivers in cases of financial hardship and for Graduate School Pathways Program participation.
Graduate School

Caldwell Hall
Ithaca, NY 14850
gradschool.cornell.edu

Cornell Graduate School
Diversity and inclusion are a part of Cornell University’s heritage. We are a recognized employer and educator valuing AA/EEO, Protected Veterans, and Individuals with Disabilities.