

# THE COLLEGE

Barnard College has been a distinguished leader in higher education for women for over 135 years and is today the most sought after private liberal arts college for women in the nation. Founded in 1889, the College was the first in New York City—and one of the few in the country—where women could receive the same rigorous liberal arts education available to men. Barnard's partnership with a great research institution, Columbia University, combined with its setting in an international city, its strength in STEM, and its unwavering dedication to the advancement of women, makes it unique among liberal arts colleges today.

Barnard is both an independently accredited and incorporated educational institution as well as an official college of Columbia University—a combination that simultaneously affords self-determination and a rich, value-enhancing partnership. Whether taking classes, conducting research, or competing in Division I athletics through the Barnard-Columbia Athletic Consortium, Barnard students make the most of the University's myriad academic and extracurricular resources. Columbia students also benefit from their association with the College; for example, they may major or minor in disciplines—such as Dance, Architecture, Theatre, and Urban Studies—that are housed at Barnard.

From the heights of upper Manhattan to the canyons of Wall Street, New York City serves as a natural extension of the Barnard campus; as a site of exploration, a laboratory for experimentation, and an object of investigation in its own right, the city is fully integrated into the curriculum across the disciplines. Beyond academics, Barnard's robust internship programs allow students to take advantage of the city's unparalleled wealth of cultural, social, and professional opportunities.

The College draws accomplished, motivated, bright, and curious young women who seek a stimulating atmosphere and diverse community. Barnard alumnae include pioneers like anthropologist Margaret Mead and Judith Kaye, the first female Chief Judge of the State of New York, along with prominent cultural figures such as choreographer Twyla Tharp; writers Zora Neale Hurston, Mary Gordon, and Jhumpa Lahiri; avant-garde multimedia artist Laurie Anderson; Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists Anna Quindlen and Natalie Angier; and multi-hyphenate filmmaker Greta Gerwig.

## Mission Statement

Barnard College aims to provide the highest quality liberal arts education to promising and high-achieving young women, offering the unparalleled advantages of an outstanding residential college in partnership with a major research university. With a dedicated faculty of scholars distinguished in their respective fields, Barnard is a community of accessible teachers and engaged students who participate together in intellectual risk-taking and discovery. Barnard students develop the intellectual resources to take advantage of opportunities as new fields, new ideas, and new technologies emerge. They graduate prepared to lead lives that are professionally satisfying and successful, personally fulfilling, and enriched by love of learning.

As a college for women, Barnard embraces its responsibility to address issues of gender in all of their complexity and urgency, and to help students achieve the personal strength that will enable them to meet the challenges they will encounter throughout their lives. Located in the cosmopolitan urban environment of New York City, and committed to diversity in its student body, faculty and staff, Barnard prepares its

graduates to flourish in different cultural surroundings in an increasingly interconnected world.

The Barnard community thrives on high expectations. By setting rigorous academic standards and giving students the support they need to meet those standards, Barnard enables them to discover their own capabilities. Living and learning in this unique environment, Barnard students become agile, resilient, responsible, and creative, prepared to lead and serve their society.

## Barnard History

Barnard College was among the pioneers in the late 19th-century crusade to make higher education available to young women.

The College grew out of the idea, first proposed by Columbia University's tenth president, Frederick A.P. Barnard, that women have an opportunity for higher education at Columbia. Initially ignored, the idea led to the creation of a "Collegiate Course for Women." Although highly-qualified women were authorized to follow a prescribed course of study leading ultimately to Columbia University degrees, no provision was made for where and how they were to pursue their studies. It was six years before Columbia's trustees agreed to the establishment of a college for women. A provisional charter was secured, and Barnard College was named in honor of its most persistent advocate.

In October 1889, the first Barnard class met in a rented brownstone at 343 Madison Avenue. Fourteen students enrolled in the School of Arts and twenty-two "specials," lacking the entrance requirements in Greek, enrolled in science. There was a faculty of six.

Nine years later Barnard moved to its present site in Morningside Heights. In 1900, Barnard was included in the educational system of Columbia University with provisions unique among women's colleges: it was governed by its own Trustees, Faculty, and Dean, and was responsible for its own endowment and facilities, while sharing instruction, the library, and the degree of the University.

## Barnard Today

From the original 14 students, enrollment has grown to over 3,200, with over 46,700 awarded degrees since 1893. The integration of teaching and scholarship occurs at an incomparable level at Barnard. Barnard's faculty of 294 women and men are teacher-scholars whose paramount concern is the education of undergraduate students and whose professional achievements bring added vitality to the classroom. This commitment to personal attention and high achievement provide the ultimate learning environment.

Barnard's liberal arts education is broad in scope and demanding. The curriculum includes a series of general education requirements—a program of courses the faculty believes provides a stimulating and thorough education, while remaining flexible and varied enough to suit a student's own interests, strengths, and talents. Classes vary in size. Those in which student participation is important are small. There are opportunities for independent study and students are often invited to work on research projects with faculty members.

In 2023, Barnard College and Columbia University amended and extended the longstanding agreement for cooperation between the institutions, an agreement which remains unique in higher education. Barnard stands as an independent college for women with its own curriculum, faculty, admissions standards, graduation requirements, trustees, endowment, and physical plant. At the same time, Barnard and Columbia share

resources, thereby giving students open access to the courses, facilities, and libraries of both schools. Barnard and Columbia students also share in a wide variety of social and extracurricular activities. Barnard boasts 80 undergraduate clubs, and students have access to an additional 500+ student life opportunities at Columbia.

From its inception, Barnard has been committed to advancing the academic, personal, and professional success of women. Students benefit from an atmosphere in which almost two-thirds of the full-time faculty are women, and women are well represented in the administration. The College is led by Laura Ann Rosenbury, former Dean at University of Florida Levin College of Law. At Barnard, women are given the opportunities and the freedom to lead both in and out of the classroom, and to develop the skills that will equip them to lead throughout their lives.

Barnard's unique ties to several of Columbia's graduate schools and to premier New York City institutions, including the Juilliard School, the Manhattan School of Music, the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, and Teachers College, give students an unusual range of educational options, including a number of joint degree programs. At Barnard students can earn a bachelors and masters through one of our 4+1 programs within Columbia's Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, The School of International and Public Affairs, The Mailman School of Public Health, The Harriman Institute and a quantitative masters at the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. Academic organizations within and beyond the University also offer vital opportunities for research, study, studio experience, internships, and community service.

Barnard has a high student retention rate, an indication of student satisfaction with the college experience. Barnard students also enjoy leaves for study, travel, and internships. By senior year, about three-quarters of students have undertaken an internship and/or pursued funded summer research across academic institutions, corporations, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and in the arts. Every year Barnard admits about 100 transfer students who come to take advantage of the educational opportunities available to Barnard women.

Every year, [Beyond Barnard](#) collects and summarizes information about post-graduate study and employment. Within the first six months after graduation, 91% of Barnard graduates from Classes 2018-2024 were working or enrolled in graduate or professional schools. Full reports are available on [Beyond Barnard's website](#).

## Accreditation

Barnard College is accredited by the [Middle State Commission on Higher Education \(MSCHE\)](#), 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, (267-284-5000) [www.msche.org](http://www.msche.org). The Middle States Commission on Higher Education is an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

The Barnard Education Program is accredited by the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP) and approved by the New York State Education Department to recommend students who complete the program for Initial Certification in either Childhood Education (Grades 1-6) or Adolescent Education (Grades 7-12). For more information, please visit <https://education.barnard.edu/certification>.

## The Campus

The Barnard campus occupies four acres of urban property along the west side of Broadway between 116th and 120th Streets. At the southern end of the campus, four residence buildings—Brooks Hall (1907), Hewitt Hall (1925), Helen Reid Hall (1961), and Iphigene Ochs Sulzberger Hall (1988)—form an enclosed quadrangle known as the "Quad."

Opposite the Main Gate at 117th street is Barnard Hall (1917), which contains seminar rooms, classrooms, faculty offices, and dance studios. The Sulzberger Parlor on the third floor is used for meetings and special events. The Julius S. Held Lecture Hall is also on the third floor. Barnard Hall's first and ground floors house the Francine A. LeFrak Foundation Center for Well-Being, which recently opened in 2024. The Center serves as a centralized hub for all wellness-related initiatives across campus and supports a 360-degree perspective on personal well-being that encompasses physical, financial, and mental health.

Just north of Barnard Hall is the Cheryl and Philip Milstein Center for Teaching and Learning, opened in September 2018. Designed by the award-winning firm Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, the 128,000-square-foot building—with a base of five floors and a tower of eleven floors—is a dynamic space at the heart of campus that is home to a new kind of library, connects students and faculty across disciplines, facilitates collaboration, and fosters dialogue. The Milstein Center includes a new kind of library, one that brings together current technologies and learning spaces in an interactive setting. As the academic hub of the campus, the center links departments and disciplines both physically and philosophically.

Further to the north, the space that was once occupied by Helen Goodhart Altschul Hall (1969), a 14-story building devoted to the sciences, has become the construction site for the Roy and Diana Vagelos Science Center (RDSC), a state-of-the-art research and teaching facility devoted to the experimental sciences. The College is reimagining the former building through a renovation of existing spaces, an expansion northward, and an interconnection into and onto Milbank Hall. This restacking and expansion will create additional space for the Biology, Chemistry, Environmental Science, and Physics & Astronomy departments. The RDSC will also feature a community space to engage the broader Morningside Heights and Harlem communities with the sciences.

Facing the RDSC construction site is The Diana Center, which was designed by the renowned architecture firm Weiss/Manfredi and is the student center for the campus. It contains the Event Oval, the Louise Heublein McCagg '59 Gallery, the Glicker-Milstein Theatre, and the Barnard Store.

Milbank Hall (1897) occupies the furthest northern end of the campus and houses administrative and faculty offices, classrooms, the Arthur Ross Greenhouse, the Minor Latham Playhouse, and the Barnard Toddler Center.

In 2003, the College's four oldest buildings—Brooks Hall, Hewitt Hall, Barnard Hall, and Milbank Hall—were added to the National Register of Historic Places.

In the immediate neighborhood, Barnard maintains additional residence halls, including Plimpton Hall (acquired in 1968), Eleanor Thomas Elliott Hall (formerly 49 Claremont Avenue, acquired in 1982 and renamed in 1992), Cathedral Gardens (constructed by Barnard in 2006), and 537 West 121st Street (acquired in 2019). In addition, three apartment buildings on West 116th Street—600 (acquired in 1971), 616 (acquired in 1964), and 620 (acquired in 1968)—are Barnard residence halls. The College also

rents additional spaces at 601 West 110th Street and in the Interchurch Center on Claremont Ave.

Columbia University is directly across the street on Broadway.