**About Mount Holyoke College – Updated Spring 2020**

*Boilerplate content for grant proposals*

Located in South Hadley, Massachusetts, Mount Holyoke College is a highly selective, nondenominational, residential, research liberal arts college for women that is gender diverse and welcomes applications from female, transgender and non-binary students. Founded in 1837, Mount Holyoke is renowned for educating women leaders, from medical pioneers to Pulitzer Prize–winning playwrights. Since its inception in 1837 the College has provided an intellectually adventurous education in the liberal arts and sciences to prepare women for lives of thoughtful, effective, and purposeful engagement in the world through a unique combination of academically rigorous education and real-world, hands-on career and research opportunities. Mount Holyoke College is a member of the Seven Sisters College Consortium, as well as the Five College Consortium (with Amherst, Smith, Hampshire Colleges, and the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

*Excerpted mission statement: Mount Holyoke College’s mission is “to prepare students, through a liberal education integrating curriculum and careers, for lives of thoughtful, effective, and purposeful engagement in the world.”*

**Demographic Profile** Mount Holyoke has a rich tradition of enrolling an unusually diverse student body, in terms of race, class, and national origin. Among its 2,200 students, 25% identify as students of color (U.S. citizens) and 27% are international students, making Mount Holyoke among the most diverse liberal arts colleges in the United States. Students come from 45 states and 76 countries. Approximately 17% of our students represent the first generation in their families to attend college.

52% of incoming first-year students were in the top 10% of their high school classes. In the widely-publicized study of economic mobility at U.S. colleges (Chetty, Friedman, et al., 2017), Mount Holyoke’s MFI ($110,400) was among the lowest among highly selective private colleges (HSPCs); as was our share of students from the top 20% in MFI (65th of 71 HSPCs), while our share of students from the bottom 20% was higher than most (15th).

**Financial Aid** Ongoing generous support from alumnae, parents, and friends—both to expendable funds and the endowment—allows Mount Holyoke to offer a superior experience to students regardless of socioeconomic background. Mount Holyoke annually awards financial aid to all students who are determined to have need; on average, 100% of need is met. In 2018-19, 60% of our students received need-based aid, with the average financial aid package totaling $34,470 (of which $33,100 was Mount Holyoke grant aid). A total of $56 million in financial aid was awarded, including $48 million in need-based aid and $8.2 million in non-need-based aid. Student loans were $6.4 million and student work-study employment equaled $2.2 million.

**Degrees Offered** With a student-faculty ratio of 10 to 1 and most classes averaging 10 to 20 students, faculty and students can collaborate closely on academic course work and research. Mount Holyoke offers the following degrees: Bachelor of Arts (B.A.); Dual degree program leading to a B.A. and Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree in engineering, in partnership with the California Institute of Technology, University of Massachusetts, or Dartmouth College; Masters of Arts in Teaching; and Masters of Arts in Mathematics Teaching. Students can select from more than 50 departmental and interdepartmental majors and minors. The majors of current students are 31% humanities, 35% natural and applied sciences, and 34% social sciences. Of these, 35% are interdisciplinary, combining applied sciences with another discipline.

The Five College Consortium allows Mount Holyoke students to choose from more than 5,000 classes and offers more than a dozen certificate programs including international relations; ethnomusicology; culture, health and science; African, Latin American, Native American, or Asian studies; cognitive neuroscience; coastal and marine sciences; and neuroscience. A free bus service connects the five colleges, which are within a 12-mile radius.

Emerging areas of study include Data Science; Public Health; Critical Ethnic Studies, Entrepreneurship, Organizations, and Society; and Business. Through a recent funding opportunity, several new faculty “innovation hires” have allowed departments to bring in scholars and practitioners who are working in growing fields like bioinformatics, environmental science, digital music and music entrepreneurship, and an interdisciplinary data science program linking with arts, computer science, and other disciplines.

**Accomplished Faculty** Among nearly 400 colleges nationwide, Mount Holyoke ranked in the top ten for its faculty, library, and classroom experience according to the 2020 Princeton Review. With a student-faculty ratio of 10 to 1 and most classes averaging 10 to 20 students, faculty and students can collaborate closely on academic course work and research. The College’s faculty of 200 includes members who speak more than 50 languages in addition to English. Nearly 60% are women; a quarter are faculty of color. The faculty includes award-winning scholars and teachers such as astronomy professor Darby Dyar and her students analyzing data for NASA gathered from the Mars probe; psychology professor Mara Breen’s human cognition study with support from the McDonnell Foundation 21st Century Science Initiative; anthropology professor Elif Babul’s research on everyday forms of state power and political authority supported by an American Council of Learned Societies fellowship; and English professor Christopher Benfey for his National Endowment for the Humanities Public Scholar Award to investigate Rudyard Kipling’s “American decade” from 1889 to 1899.

**Academic Centers at Mount Holyoke** Three academic centers at the College empower students to become agents of change—globally competent, environmentally responsible, and ready to lead.

The [**McCulloch Center**](https://www.mtholyoke.edu/global) **for Global Initiatives** is the hub and catalyst for comprehensive internationalization at Mount Holyoke. The McCulloch Center offers varied and meaningful opportunities for students to advance their global competencies—and for faculty to incorporate global perspectives into their teaching. The McCulloch Center collaborates with partners on and off campus to weave global education into the Mount Holyoke experience through course support, international research and internships, study abroad, conferences, scholars-in-residence, and programs to integrate international students into college life.

The [**Miller Worley Center**](https://www.mtholyoke.edu/mwce) **for the Environment** is dedicated to actively engaging Mount Holyoke students in the scientific, social/human, and global dimensions of environmental study. By hosting speakers, coordinating career panels, and offering internships, for example, the Miller Worley Center enables students to make connections—across disciplines, across points of view, across constructs—that help them understand the concept of "environment" more broadly in their work, community, and lives.

The [**Weissman Center**](https://www.mtholyoke.edu/wcl) **for Leadership** promotes the exploration and expansion of leadership—in all its many shapes and forms. The Center helps students, faculty and staff learn the skills to think strategically and yield influence—such as by identifying audiences, honing messages, advocating and organizing for change, and taking leadership into daily life. The courses, internships, public events, workshops, and networking opportunities available through the Center span its core programs of Leadership and Public Service, Speaking, Arguing, and Writing, Passport to Leadership, and Community-Based Learning (CBL). The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching awarded its community engagement classification to the CBL program, a prestigious designation given to institutions that demonstrate their mission, culture, leadership, resources, and practices support “dynamic and noteworthy community engagement.”

**Connecting Curriculum to Career** The College helps make connections between students’ academic and career aspirations through experiential learning opportunities--internships, study abroad, hands-on research with faculty, community-based learning, volunteer work, and independent research. Students can choose from dozens of domestic internships and research assignments as well as from 150 study abroad programs in over 50 countries. Laurel Fellowship Awards (need-based financial aid) are available for students studying abroad, and over 90% of eligible applicants are approved for funding annually. The College's comprehensive Lynk experience bridges curriculum and career, guaranteeing every student a paid internship or research opportunity. Other Lynk resources including in-depth advising, alumnae mentoring, community-based learning, and structured ways to process and reflect upon such experiences and further shape students’ career paths.

The College’s Nexus: Curriculum to Career program explicitly links professional experiential opportunities and structured reflection with nine pre-professional tracks: Educational Policy and Practice; Development Studies; Museums, Archives, and Public History; Global Business; Journalism, Media, and Public Discourse; Law, Public Policy and Human Rights; Engineering; and Non-Profit Organizations.

**Other Optional Elements**

**After College** Within five years of graduation, nearly 70% of alumnae enroll in a graduate or professional degree program. Ten years out, that number rises to 80%. Our alumnae are distinguished not only by their academic and professional achievements, but also by significant contributions to their communities and strong sense of public engagement. The College’s Career Development Center, with more than 1,000 employer connections, and the Alumnae Network of more than 20,000 individuals provide powerful resources for launching the next phase of students’ lives, whether graduate school or work in business and nonprofit sectors.

**The Sciences at Mount Holyoke [longer version available]** The College has played a pivotal role in producing women scientists since its founding[[1]](#footnote-1) by chemist and education pioneer Mary Lyon. Her early emphasis on learning in the laboratory is widely credited with setting the standard for modern science education in a liberal arts setting. Building on that leadership the College now emphasizes student preparation for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. More than 35 percent of Mount Holyoke’s 2200 students chose to major in STEM, significantly higher than the proportion of women who typically major in math or science at comparable co-educational institutions. Mount Holyoke has produced the greatest number of women who go on to earn STEM doctorates among all baccalaureate colleges in the last 50 years (1968-2017).[[2]](#footnote-2)

Collaborative research among faculty and students is a critical element of Mount Holyoke’s academic culture at Mount Holyoke, providing students with outstanding mentoring and access to sophisticated scientific instrumentation and techniques that few undergraduates experience. Most of our science majors spend their summers doing independent research, and most majors write senior theses based on research with faculty.

While maintaining its core STEM curriculum, Mount Holyoke is breaking new ground in computer science, data science, and restoration ecology. The transformation of the traditional sciences--such as physics, chemistry, and biology, through computational thinking and algorithmic problem solving--is increasingly evident at Mount Holyoke. These efforts have won generous assistance from foundations and government agencies, including NSF, NIH, NASA, the Clare Boothe Luce Fund, the Sherman Fairchild and Dreyfus foundations, and HHMI. In 2015 Mount Holyoke received significant grants from Google for its computer science program and from the Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company ($1.2 million) to help establish the new Women in Data Science program, a collaboration with Smith College. The College’s restoration ecology program is one of just a few nationally being offered at a liberal arts college. Also, in collaboration with Smith College, Amherst College, and Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke has helped to build the Four College Biomathematics Consortium (4CBC) – a multi-campus community committed to research-centered education and the training of young scholars capable of making significant contributions to this emerging field.

**Global Education** Mount Holyoke has long recognized that global competence is a prerequisite for successful careers in the twenty-first century. Students at Mount Holyoke experience the world in countless ways, both inside and outside the classroom from it rich curricular offerings on global issues and exceptional international diversity of our community, to the wealth of opportunities for study, internships and research abroad. In recognition of its role as a national leader in the field of international education, the College’s McCulloch Center for Global Leadership was awarded the prestigious Senator Paul Simon Award for Comprehensive Internationalization, joining past recipients such as MIT, NYU, Yale and Rutgers. The award “recognizes colleges and universities that are making significant, well-planned, well-executed, and well-documented progress toward comprehensive internationalization – especially those using innovative and creative approaches.” The McCulloch Center advances internationalization across campus, as well as in partnership with a network of organizations around the globe. It coordinates study abroad, manages a set of international internship opportunities, hosts global scholars-in-residence, and holds a global challenges conference every two years.

**Full Mission of the College** Mount Holyoke’s mission is to provide an intellectually adventurous education in the liberal arts and sciences through academic programs recognized internationally for their excellence and range; to draw students from all backgrounds into an exceptionally diverse and inclusive learning community with a highly accomplished, committed, and responsive faculty and staff; to continue building on the College’s historic legacy of leadership in the education of women; and to prepare students, through a liberal education integrating curriculum and careers, for lives of thoughtful, effective, and purposeful engagement in the world.

**Resources and Facilities** **[Shorter version]** Mount Holyoke's superb resources and facilities include an [806,000-volume library](https://www.mtholyoke.edu/about/library), a first-rate sports and dance complex, [Equestrian Center](http://athletics.mtholyoke.edu/facilities/equestrian_center/index), and [golf course](http://www.orchardsgolf.com/). It’s $36-million renovated, state-of-the-art [Science Center](https://www.mtholyoke.edu/about/science) features interconnected classrooms and labs are outfitted with advanced scientific instrumentation—such as spectrometers and DNA sequencing equipment—that at other schools is reserved only for graduate students. The Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, ranked eleventh among the top 35 best college museums, serves as a nexus for object-based learning across academic disciplines and as a resource for the broader community through direct engagement with its collection of 17,000 objects from around the world and across the centuries. Other arts facilities include Pratt Music Hall; a dance theatre and studios; and the Rooke Theatre as well as spacious, well-lit drawing, painting, printmaking, and sculpture art studios; a digital printmaking lab; and a senior studio with individual studios for senior art majors. The newly expanded Blanchard Campus Center includes a student art gallery and multi-use performance and exhibit spaces. The College’s new makerspace,Fimbel Maker & Innovation Lab, is used by a wide variety of disciplines to enhance curricular learning, increase technical literacy, and help liberal arts students create, invent, and learn.

**Resources and Facilities** **[Detailed version]** Mount Holyoke College’s 800-acre campus is consistently named one of the most beautiful in the nation with its neo-Gothic buildings, spacious greens, two small lakes, and a magnificent tree canopy. The main campus is an arboretum with a diverse collection of trees and shrubs, supported by the **Talcott Greenhouse**, a 6,500-square-foot complex used for teaching, research, ornamental display, and plant propagation. A nature preserve spanning more than 300 acres serves as an environmental classroom for exploration and research.

The College’s $36-million, state-of-the-art **Science Center** supports Mount Holyoke's longstanding commitment to women in science and fosters interdepartmental interaction, collaborative research, pedagogical innovation, and curricular planning. Students benefit from hands-on work with sophisticated instrumentation often reserved for graduate students at other institutions. The equipment inventory includes a solar greenhouse, a state-of-the-art microscopy facility, two nuclear magnetic resonance spectrometers, a mass spectrometer, extensive molecular biology and genomics instruments, and instrumentation for fabrication and characterization of nanomaterials.

The College’s new makerspace, **Fimbel Maker & Innovation Lab,** is used by a wide variety of disciplines to enhance curricular learning, increase technical literacy, and help liberal arts students explore pathways into careers in engineering, computer science, and other STEM fields. Whether connecting artists with computer scientists, or entrepreneurs with science majors, the makerspace team offers a hub to spark interdisciplinary collaboration and innovative hands-on learning.

The **Mount Holyoke College Art Museum**, ranked eleventh among the top 35 best college museums, serves as a nexus for object-based learning across academic disciplines and as a resource for the broader community through direct engagement with its collection of 17,000 objects from around the world and across the centuries. Special strengths include Asian art; nineteenth- and twentieth-century European and American paintings and sculpture; Egyptian, Greek, and Roman art; medieval sculpture; early Italian Renaissance paintings; and an extensive collections of prints, drawings, and photographs. In honor of its 140th anniversary, the Museum unveiled a yearlong museum-wide exhibition featuring a selection of art donated and purchased over the last five years, including expansion of its global collection and important works by women and artists of color. This is key as the museum aspires to have its diverse student body reflected in the art on view. In a given year more than 75 faculty teach over 100 courses from two dozen disciplines use the facilities.

The **Joseph Allen Skinner Museum,** administered by the Art Museum, is a twentieth-century cabinet of curiosities housed in a nineteenth-century reconstructed church. Consisting of the diverse collections of Joseph Skinner (1867–1946), a local manufacturer and philanthropist, the museum presents an eclectic mix of material culture from western Massachusetts and around the world.

Additional arts facilities include expanded and renovated music and art buildings with studios for drawing, painting, printmaking, and sculpture; and a digital printmaking lab. Rehearsal and performance spaces, teaching studios, classrooms and practice rooms support music, film and video production and performance endeavors.

**Williston Library** contains 800,000 print volumes, more than 6,500 subscriptions, and licensed access to more than 200 scholarly research databases, as well as thousands of ebooks and ejournals. In addition, the Library shares a catalog with other members of the Five College Consortium; the combined collections provide students and faculty with direct access to more than eight million volumes. The library also features several innovative multipurpose venues for collaboration, research, and technology support.

**Athletics at Mount Holyoke** Athletic facilities include a first-class sports and dance complex, equestrian center, and golf course to support 14 varsity sports programs and several competitive club sports teams including dressage, fencing, ice hockey, rugby, ultimate Frisbee, and western riding. Mount Holyoke is a member of the NCAA Division III and the New England Women’s and Men’s Athletic Conference. Mount Holyoke competes among many top ranked teams and long-time local rivals.

1. See Miriam R. Levin, *Defining Women’s Scientific Enterprise: Mount Holyoke Faculty and the Rise of American Science* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2005). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. 2017 National Science Foundation Survey of Earned Doctorates [↑](#footnote-ref-2)