

Williams College

A Self-Guided Tour

Welcome to Williams! Though our campus buildings are currently closed to visitors, we hope you'll enjoy learning more about the college through our self-guided tour. Please note that while the state of Massachusetts does not require masking, they advise that individuals who are not fully vaccinated wear masks indoors, as well as outdoors when social distancing is not possible.

To help guide you through campus, you'll find directions in italics, accompanied by information you might hear on a student-led tour. Please grab a campus map, though should you find yourself lost, feel free to ask anyone for directions—it's a very friendly campus. This is YOUR tour, so choose the stops and read the sections that are most interesting to you. If you're ready, off we go!

*The tour begins in front of the **Office of Admission and Student Financial Services**, located in **Weston Hall** on the corner of Main Street and Stetson Court.*



Williams College was founded in 1791 when Colonel Ephraim Williams bequeathed funds to Massachusetts to start a free school to educate the sons of farmers. He had three stipulations: 1) the school had to be in Massachusetts, 2) the school had to be named after him, and 3) the town that the school was in had to be named after him. At the time, Harvard was the only other institution of higher learning in Massachusetts. Williams received its charter in 1793.

*Go towards Main Street (also known as Route 2) and cross the street. Turn right and continue towards the **'62 Center for Theatre and Dance**, which will be on your left.*

The '62 Center is a state-of-the-art building with three performance spaces: the 550-seat **Mainstage**, the 220-seat **Adams Memorial Theatre**, and the 150-seat **CenterStage**, a black-box theater.



It also includes dance studios, classrooms and costume shop facilities. All theatre performances at Williams have open auditions, meaning any student can participate regardless of previous experience or involvement in the theatre department. Cap and Bells, the oldest student theatre organization in the country, puts on many shows throughout the year,

while the theatre department itself produces one main performance each semester. Additionally, any student can apply for funding from Cap and Bells to produce their own show.

The professional performance series, the CenterSeries, brings world-class performers to campus each year (recently: PHILADANCO!, The SITI Company, Alvin Ailey II, New York City Ballet, Bill T. Jones and Laurie Anderson). The '62 Center is also home to the Williamstown Theatre Festival, the only summer-stock theatre festival that has won a Tony Award for outstanding regional theatre. Every summer, Williamstown becomes a mini-Broadway—recent performers include Uma Thurman, Jesse Tyler Ferguson, Matthew Broderick, Justin Long, Bradley Cooper, Marisa Tomei, S. Epatha Merkerson and more.

The '62 Center also houses Williams' dance programs, all of which are open to all students regardless of their background in dance. Students participate in our African dance group, modern dance company, step team, as well as other student-run groups. Many also take classes or rehearse in the main dance studio on the second floor — one of the most beautiful spaces on campus.

*Continue down Route 2 toward Park Street and the **Faculty House**.*

The building on the left is the **Faculty House**, a common meeting space for students and faculty. With a 7:1 student to faculty ratio, Williams students have remarkable access to faculty members both in and out of the classroom. One of the events hosted here is the Lyceum Dinner, which aims to encourage dialogue between faculty and students. Every month, students have the opportunity to invite a faculty or staff member to share a catered, three-course meal sponsored by the college.

This is just one example of how Williams fosters opportunities for students and faculty to develop deeper relationships in the community.

Continue down Route 2, cross Park Street, and turn left on the first paved walkway after the large house on your left.



The large yellow house that you've passed on the left is the **President's House**. The President's House was built in 1801, acquired by the college in 1858, and has been home to many Williams presidents. Currently, President Maud S. Mandel, the 18th President of the College and Professor of History, lives here with her family. Throughout the year, the president invites students to her house for dinner to dine with

distinguished guests, for holidays and special events, as well as to be recognized for significant involvement on campus.

As you go down the pathway next to the President's House, please check out the panoramic views of the surrounding mountains. The Williams campus covers 450 acres, and greater Williamstown has over 100 miles of hiking trails. Given the natural setting, **Mountain Day** is one of the most beloved Williams traditions. On one of the first three Fridays in October, classes are canceled by the president and the college hosts an all-campus picnic on the lawn in front of you. Throughout the day students have the opportunity to celebrate community and the beautiful natural surroundings; a favorite activity is the hike up to Stony Ledge for singing, doughnuts, and apple cider. Mountain Day is run by the Williams Outing Club (WOC), the largest student organization on campus. For just \$10 per year, WOC provides students with many great outdoor opportunities, such as discounted ski passes and free rentals of everything from snowshoes to fly fishing equipment.

*You are approaching **Paresky Center**, which is located on your left.*

Paresky Center opened in February of 2007 and serves as the campus hub for students, open to them 24 hours a day. The great hall in the center of the first floor is called **Baxter Hall**. This is the main meeting and lounge area. **Lee Snack Bar** is a popular spot, where students use dining points to buy mozzarella sticks, cheeseburgers, gelato, salads, etc., throughout the day in addition to during "late-night" hours (until 1 AM). The snack bar is a bustling social space, especially during weekend nights.



The first floor is also home to **Whitman’s dining hall**. Whitman’s is the only dining hall that is not buffet-style (we have two other dining halls on campus—**Mission** and **Driscoll**). The college works closely with students to accommodate most dietary preferences at each dining venue. Our food is locally sourced whenever possible and made right in our dining halls — it is never contracted or outsourced.

Downstairs is the **Leutkemeyer Lounge**, where air hockey, pool, foosball, and ping pong tables are well-used by all. Also downstairs is the **'82 Grill**, which serves pub fare until 1 AM.

Downstairs Paresky is also home to an all-purpose theater as well as **Grab ‘n’ Go**, where students short on time can grab a bagged lunch on their way to class.

On the top floor of Paresky are two study lounges. The lounge facing the quad, the **'58 Lounge**, has a large balcony, where students can go study during the warmer months. The other lounge, the **Henze Fireplace Lounge**, is home to a Sunday tradition called Storytime, where a community member shares a personal story (and their favorite baked treat). Upstairs Paresky also houses a quiet study lounge, the Chaplains' office, the school newspaper’s office, The Office of Student Life, as well as other student-facing departments. The building contains many study rooms and classrooms which students can reserve for meetings or group study sessions.

*If you continue past the front doors of **Paresky** and take a left, you will see two identical brick buildings facing each other. These buildings, **Sage Hall** and **Williams Hall**, comprise **Frosh Quad**.*



Half of the first-years at Williams live in the **Frosh Quad**; the other half live in **Mission Hall**, the large, gray building that you may be able to see if you look down the hill past the Frosh Quad. Roughly 60% of Williams first-years live in singles. All first-years are assigned to an "entry"—a group comprised of roughly 30-50 first-year students and two Junior Advisors (JAs) that live in the same section of first-year housing.

Unlike a typical Resident Advisor (RA), JAs do not have disciplinary power and are not paid. Rather, each JA serves as a mentor, resource and friend during the exciting, but sometimes challenging transition to college life. The entry is a microcosm of the Williams community, reflecting the diverse backgrounds and interests of our campus, and serves as one of the first support networks our first-years encounter. Many of our students form life-long relationships within their entries!

*Before you leave **Frosh Quad**, look through the gates to see the **'68 Center for Career Exploration**.*



The **'68 Center for Career Exploration**, housed in the alumni relations office, is a wonderful resource for students and graduates of the college to help identify passions, strengths and to plan for the future. Career counselors help students prepare grad school applications, organize alumni panels, bring speakers to campus, review resumes,

and host recruiters to meet with students in person. They connect students to our loyal alumni network who provide expertise in their professional areas. Williams also offers one of the most generous internship grant programs, funding over 200 students each summer.

*Leave **Frosh Quad** and stop in front of **Chapin Hall**.*



Chapin Hall contains the largest auditorium space at Williams, capable of seating roughly 1,000 people. First-years start their journey at the college gathered together in Chapin during orientation for addresses by the President, panel discussions, the singing of the school song and more. Outside of orientation, this is often where Williams hosts speakers and performers like Michelle Alexander, Monica Palacios, Ericka Hart, Min Jin Lee, Tarana Burke, Jesymn Ward, Laverne Cox, Bryan Stevenson, Tom Friedman, Howard Dean, Ben Stein, Salman Rushdie, Pat Buchanan, Run DMC's Jam Master J, Noam Chomsky, Angela Davis, Arianna Huffington, the Congressional Black Caucus

James Taylor, among others. Many of the school's musical groups and The Berkshire Symphony also perform in Chapin throughout the year.

*To the right of **Chapin**, please take the pathway into **Sawyer Quad**.*

To your left you will see a concrete building, the **Bernhard Music Center**, which is home to the music department and all the musical groups on campus. About a quarter of the student body is involved with music on campus in some capacity. There is a wide variety of instrumental and vocal groups: a percussion ensemble, a jazz ensemble, a flute choir, student symphony, symphonic winds, eight a cappella groups, choirs and the Berkshire Symphony — a group comprised of



roughly equal parts Williams students, music faculty and area professionals. Williams offers free music lessons to any student interested in taking lessons with one of our instructors.

Schapiro Hall, ahead and to your right, houses many professors' offices and humanities classrooms. Across the quad is its sister building, **Hollander Hall**, which also serves as a

humanities hub. The buildings opened in 2008 and are both LEED Gold-certified, meaning that they are held to high, environmentally-friendly standards.

*Looking ahead towards **Sawyer Library**, you will see to your left a white building and an array of solar panels. This is the **Class of 1966 Environmental Center**.*



The Environmental Center, made possible by the Class of 1966, opened in 2015. The building is designed to be a net-zero energy building and harvests and treats its own water. It is also open 24/7 to students. The building is home to the Center for Environmental Studies, which administers the Environmental Studies major and the Environmental Studies and Maritime Studies concentrations, as well as the **Zilkha Center for Environmental Initiatives**, which serves as the

college's sustainability office. It houses faculty and staff offices, a classroom, student study spaces, and a kitchen. Outside are herb and vegetable gardens, fruit trees and berry bushes. The Zilkha Center is committed to protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment in which the Williams community learns, works and lives. The staff research, investigate, support, promote and implement sustainability programs and educational initiatives around campus and throughout our broader Berkshire community. The new building is designed to meet the guidelines of the Living Building Challenge, the highest sustainable building certification.

To become certified, it must complete a performance year in which it operates as a net-zero energy and net-zero water building. The Environmental Center, which combines a historic building and a new addition, is currently working towards its certification.

*Please stop outside of **Sawyer Library**.*



Sawyer Library, our largest library, was completed in 2014 and, like Hollander and Shapiro Halls, is a LEED certified building. Sawyer was designed with a focus on student experience, offering a variety of study spaces, including group study areas and individual carrels. In addition to housing our humanities library, Sawyer is home

to the **College Archives**, the **Chapin Library of Rare Books**, and a branch of the **Office of Information Technology**. The Chapin Library has original copies of four founding documents (Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation, Constitution, and Bill of Rights) and is utilized by classes in all disciplines.

Sawyer is also home to faculty offices, three classrooms, a videoconferencing room, audio and visual recording facilities, a virtual reality room, computer labs and public computers, as well as the student-staffed Writing Workshop. The program provides students with assistance at any stage of the writing process: from brainstorming to final drafts. Sawyer is open 8:00 am–2:30 am throughout the school year, and a 24/7 study space is available to students as well.

*From the front entrance to **Sawyer Library**, take a right and go towards **Hopkins Hall**, the brick building ahead and to your right.*



Hopkins Hall is home to the college's administrative offices—the President, Deans, Registrar, Campus Safety and Security, etc.—and several classrooms. At Williams, each class is assigned a dean who offers academic and personal support. There are also deans who work specifically with international students and the Williams First community for students who are the first in their families to

go to college, travel away after high school, attend a college like Williams, and more.

*Continue to the left of **Hopkins** and towards Route 2.*



On your left is **Thompson Chapel**, now used for various events, including choir concerts and religious services. It is also home to many of the school's religious groups, including Williams Christian Fellowship, Muslim Student Union, Newman Catholic and Buddhist Student Group. **The Jewish Religious Center** is located behind the Office of Admission and Student Financial Services, and contains a

temple, kosher kitchen, library and meeting space. In total, there are over 40 religious traditions represented on campus, and our four chaplains are available to connect with students regardless of their faith. Thompson is also used during commencement each year for a longstanding tradition: a watch is dropped from the top of the chapel's tower. If the watch breaks, the graduating class is expected to have good luck for the rest of their lives!

*Cross Route 2 and head up the short hill on your left toward the large bronze eyeballs (an art installation by Louise Bourgeois). You should now see **Goodrich Hall** on your right, **East College** on your left and **Lawrence Hall** in front of you.*



Goodrich Hall is a popular social space on campus. The building is home to the **Goodrich Coffee Bar**, a student-run coffee bar where students can use their meal plan to buy breakfast in the morning and coffee at night. Goodrich also hosts student parties, concerts and performances. **Lawrence Hall** is the home of the college's Art History Department.

Many Art History courses meet in the lecture hall located in the lower level of Lawrence Hall. The Art Studio Department is located in the **Spencer Art Studio Building**. Many of the country's top art museums and institutes (MoMA, the LA County Art Museum, and the National Gallery) are run by Williams grads, who are endearingly dubbed the "Williams Art Mafia". Lawrence Hall is also home to the **Williams College Museum of Art (WCMA)**. WCMA is a dynamic learning environment with more than 15,000 pieces of art in its permanent collection.

WCMA launched WALLS (Williams Art Loan for Living Spaces), a student art loan program, in 2014. The goal of the program is to allow students to live with art, and to encourage sustained interaction with and deep thinking about original pieces of art. Currently 120 works of art are loaned to students every semester.

Within walking distance of campus is the **Clark Art Institute**, one of the top art museums in the country. Down the road in North Adams is **MASS MoCA** (Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art). MASS MoCA is among the nation's largest multidisciplinary centers for contemporary visual, performing and media arts. It was created by Williams alum and then-WCMA Director Tom Krens '69 (another Williams alumnus, Joe Thompson '81, was the founding director until 2020).

*Return to the sidewalk along Route 2, and turn left to continue towards Spring Street. On your left, you'll pass **Lasell Gymnasium**. Cross the street, turn left and head down Spring Street. Feel free to go into a few shops, or to grab a cup of coffee at **Tunnel City Coffee**.*



Spring Street is the town's quaint, yet lively commercial center. It features everything a college student might need—two bookstores, a pharmacy, restaurants, sandwich shops, a coffee shop, a movie theater, a hair salon, ice cream, and more. **The Williams Bookstore**, at the bottom of Spring Street, is the place to go for

Williams paraphernalia and a wide selection of books. **The Williams Inn**, also located at the bottom of Spring Street, opened in 2019 and has 64 rooms and a full-service restaurant and bar — The Barn — that focuses on using locally-sourced, seasonal ingredients.

Follow the walkway to the left of **Papa Charlie's** sandwich shop to a small plaza. There, you can see the swimming pool, basketball court, and **Simon Squash Center**.



Approximately 30% of all Williams students participate in one of our 34 varsity teams and there are also opportunities to join JV, club or intramural teams. Williams competes at the NCAA Division III level and is a member of the NESCAC athletic conference. Williams has won the Director's Cup (awarded to the school with the best postseason performance

with the best postseason performance in each athletic division) 22 out of 24 years and counting.

Return to Spring Street. If you approach **Spice Root** restaurant, you'll see a large, gray stone building to its right. This is **Morgan Hall**, one of our many upperclass student dorms. Go to the right of Morgan Hall along Route 2 and you'll see a set of stone steps leading up to a brick, ivy-covered building, **West College**.



You are standing at **Hopkins Gate**, a daily reminder to passing students to "Climb High, Climb Far." The words inscribed on Hopkins Gate are also parting wisdom for graduating seniors, who parade through the gate as part of Fall Convocation, a tradition that celebrates the Senior Class and its many accomplishments.

Beyond the gates is **West College**. West College is the oldest building on campus. When the college first opened, it was the only building on campus, housing the dormitory, library, chapel, classrooms and cafeteria. It is now used as upperclass student housing.

*Continue left of the gates to enter the **Science Quad**. Look into the **Schow Science Center**, the large, glass building in the center of the quad.*



More than half of all students choose to conduct graduate-level research (in various fields from chemistry to political science to studio art). The Science Quad is home to our Math, Psychology, Geosciences, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Astronomy and Computer Science departments. A renovation was completed in 2001 and the **Schow Science Center** was added.

You are now standing outside of Schow Atrium, which serves as a general meeting/studying/socializing space, and houses the **Eco Café**. **Schow Library** contains group study rooms, classrooms, math and science publications, and public computers.

*From outside of Schow Atrium, take a left and follow the sidewalk down to **Morley Circle** — home of the **Davis Center** and the **Hopper Science Center**.*



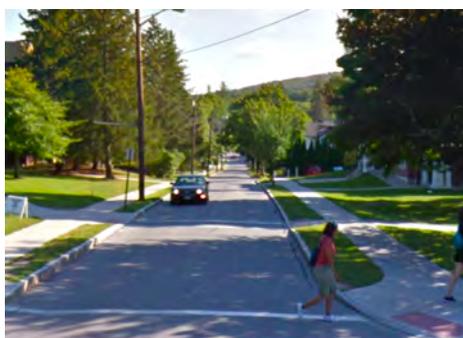
The **Davis Center (DC)**, located in Jenness, Hardy and Rice Houses, seeks to advance broad campus engagement with complex issues of identity, history, and cultures as they affect intellectual, creative, and social life on campus. The DC was founded in 1989 in response to student activism that promoted equity, social justice and representation of historically marginalized groups at Williams. The DC sponsors a variety of programming throughout the year, including lunches, faculty, staff and student trainings, campus-wide lectures and film screenings on topics such as environmental justice and racial educational disparities, among other examples. DC staff also provides advising and support to the nearly 25 affinity groups that comprise the Minority Coalition (MinCo).

The **Hopper Science Center** is across from the Davis Center, and was completed in 2018. It has added 77,000 square feet to Williams science facilities, and it includes updated research laboratories, collaborative study spaces and faculty offices.

*Return to the Science Quad, and have a look at the **Wachenheim Science Center**.*

The **Wachenheim Science Center** has just been completed, and houses the Math/Stats, Psychology and Geosciences Departments, in addition to including a large auditorium, collaborative spaces for students and faculty, and laboratories.

*Exit the **Science Quad** taking the path to the right of **Clark Hall**. Cross **Hoxsey Street** and continue along **Route 2** towards **Weston Hall**, where your tour began.*



Hoxsey Street is where some off-campus housing at the college is located. On-campus housing is guaranteed for all four years, and 96% of the student body lives on campus. Seniors are allowed to live off campus, and a small number do. However, as you can see, off-campus living is still very much a part of the campus. The brick row houses that line **Route 2** were home to fraternities until the Greek system was abolished through a

student-led movement in 1969. Once Greek life was removed, most of the buildings were sold, leased or given to the school. The houses now are dorms as well as home to various department offices.

You have arrived back at **Weston Hall**. This was, of course, only a brief introduction to the college, and we encourage you to continue learning more about Williams! Visit the admission and student financial services website to engage a current student, sign up for a campus tour or one of our virtual programs. We also suggest browsing the college website, which has a wealth of information on academics, athletics, and student life. Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us:

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Enjoy the rest of your stay here in Williamstown, and we hope to see you again soon!