



Claremont McKenna College
CMC 101 Guide

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The College

Welcome to Claremont McKenna College, or “CMC” as we like to call it. We hope this overview helps you learn more about our community, our traditions, and how best to refer to the College.

Mission, Principles, and Motto

Claremont McKenna College (CMC) is a highly selective, independent, coeducational, residential, undergraduate liberal arts college.

Our Mission

To prepare its students for thoughtful and productive lives and responsible leadership in business, government, and the professions, and to support faculty and student scholarship that contribute to intellectual vitality and the understanding of public policy issues.

Our Principles

Claremont McKenna College pursues its mission by providing a liberal arts education that emphasizes economics and political science; promotes faculty and student scholarship that contributes to intellectual vitality and an understanding of public policy issues; supports a professoriate that is dedicated to effective undergraduate teaching; reinforces a close student-teacher relationship that fosters critical inquiry; sustains an active residential and intellectual environment; sponsors scholarly support for a faculty of teacher-scholars; and champions freedom of expression, viewpoint diversity, and constructive dialogue, as well as institutional **neutrality** through The Open Academy.

Motto

CRESCIT CUM COMMERCIO CIVITAS

“Civilization prospers with commerce”

About *Claremont McKenna College*

Since 1946, CMC's mission has been to prepare students for thoughtful and productive lives and responsible leadership in business, government, and the professions. The College attracts a student body that is broadly diverse and accomplished beyond the classroom.

Located on a scenic, tree-lined residential campus 30 miles east of Los Angeles, CMC is a member of The Claremont Colleges, a seven-college consortium modeled after Oxford University. CMC students choose from more than 2,200 classes and participate in co-curricular activities with 7,000 other students at Harvey Mudd College, Pitzer College, Pomona College, and Scripps College, as well as the Claremont Graduate University and Keck Graduate Institute. Students have the best of both worlds: the intimacy of a small residential college with small classes and a student-faculty ratio of nine to one, and the shared resources of a larger research university.

Renowned for expertise in economics and government, CMC features accomplished scholars who are committed teachers in the humanities, sciences, and social sciences. The school is distinguished by eleven world-class research institutes. Exceptionally high numbers of undergraduate students conduct research with professors and get to know them as colleagues.

The College emphasizes the integration of leadership and innovation experience within institutes, student enterprises, on-campus fellowships, and sponsored off-campus internships.

For more information about the campus, the buildings and places of interest, please visit [Campus Maps](#).

Claremont McKenna College vs CMC

When referring to the College with external audiences, please use "Claremont McKenna College." When you are interacting with other students, families, faculty, staff and alumni, feel free to use "CMC."

CMC's History

In September 1946, 86 students and seven faculty members opened a new "undergraduate school for men" in Claremont, California. Classes began even before a name was chosen; the school was incorporated as Claremont Men's College in the spring of 1947. CMC was the third Claremont College, following Pomona College and Scripps College.

Many of the first students, as well as the College's president George Benson, were returning World War II GIs. The new college's purpose was clear: to prepare future leaders of private and public enterprise through a distinctive liberal arts curriculum. Rather than train students for particular jobs in government and industry, CMC sought to produce graduates able to apply lessons from not only business and government courses, but the study of history, philosophy, literature, the arts, and sciences as well.

The elevation of academic standards, facilities, and resources escalated with each decade. By the 1970s, as Claremont Men's College was gaining recognition as a top-tier liberal arts college, the College's leadership acknowledged coeducation as vital to its future development. Women were admitted in 1976, and in 1978 six transfer students composed the first class of women graduates. The College continued to be called Claremont Men's College for the first five years of coeducation. In 1981, the College was renamed Claremont McKenna College, recognizing the role of founding benefactor and trustee Donald McKenna.

Athletics at CMC began with joint Pomona-Claremont teams. In 1957, CMC joined Harvey Mudd College to form CMC-HMC teams with the Stags mascot. With coeducation, the current Claremont-Mudd-Scripps women's teams were created, adopting the Scripps Athena mascot. Though fitness and recreation have always been important to the CMC experience (the College maintains a physical education requirement), CMS Athletics has become highly competitive in NCAA Division III, with several teams typically in contention for national championships.

CMC has also built over time a range of educational programming beyond traditional coursework that is unique to its leadership-focused environment. Eleven campus Research Institutes and Centers provide students with opportunities to collaborate with faculty to a degree normally only found at the graduate level. Nearly 75% of Claremont McKenna students participate in research with faculty.

By the start of the 21st century, CMC was solidly established as a top national liberal arts college, with a faculty of leading scholar-teachers and an accomplished base of alumni committed to the College's success. From that foundation, CMC made several leaps forward in the 2000s. After raising \$635 million by 2013 through the largest capital campaign in liberal arts college history, older facilities were replaced with new energy efficient and architecturally significant ones, including the Kravis Center academic complex and the Roberts Pavilion athletics, events, and recreation center. Enrollment expanded from 1,000 students in 1999 to 1,300 students today and, as a result, faculty expanded to keep the faculty student ratio at 9:1 and 85% of classes taught with fewer than 20 students. A \$200 million gift from alumnus and trustee Robert A. Day created an eponymous undergraduate and graduate scholars program in economics and finance. CMC continues to maintain one of the highest per-student endowments in higher education.

In 2014, The Student Imperative was introduced, a multi-faceted initiative aimed at addressing the problem of rising tuition costs in higher education. Since then, CMC has been guided by the expansion of opportunity as a powerful engine of mobility.

In 2019, the College published "[The 2019 CMC Strategy Report](#)", which continues to inform CMC's priorities. It reaffirms the College's founding vision and mission, and emphasizes that CMC's *foundational strategic priority* should be to:

- **Reinforce the Founding Vision for Claremont McKenna College:** The founding vision for CMC continues to provide the most effective approach to educating CMC students for thoughtful and productive lives and responsible leadership in business, government, and the professions.

From that foundational priority, the Report identifies two strategic priorities to ensure the present and future vitality of the vision and mission:

- **Strengthen CMC's Programs in the Sciences, Computer Science, and Data Science:** To address significant gaps in faculty resources and facilities that have developed between the sciences and CMC's programs in the social sciences and humanities, and to better prepare CMC students for tomorrow's world of affairs.
- **Expand Student Opportunity:** To continue successfully competing for, enrolling, and fully supporting the students best able to fulfill CMC's mission of preparing tomorrow's leaders.

Opening Fall 2024, the Robert Day Sciences Center and Kravis Department of Integrated Sciences will house state-of-the-art technology and interactive environments. The program itself is defined by several unique factors: it seeks to prepare responsible leaders to contribute to the improvement of the human condition by addressing socio-scientific challenges and approaches to explore them, including laboratory and computational methods as well as those from the humanities and social sciences. The program integrates the natural sciences by organizing around three grand challenges (health, brain, and planet) rather than around traditional and, increasingly artificial, disciplinary subunits. It integrates content and concepts within courses rather than by drawing from a set of existing traditional disciplinary courses, allowing students to explore and apply connections between fields early and often.

For more information on CMC's history, visit [History of the College](#) or refer to Kevin Starr's book, *Commerce and Civilization: Claremont McKenna College, The First Fifty Years 1946-1996*.

The Open Academy

CMC's nationally-recognized Open Academy develops a critical response to the educational imperative of our time: overcoming what divides us to solve the world's most challenging problems. Through core commitments to Freedom of Expression, Viewpoint Diversity, and Constructive Dialogue, students are given the tools to listen respectfully, ask incisive questions, and engage with greater curiosity and openness to differences of opinion. This is how we strengthen the national practice of our democracy. For more information about the founding of the Open Academy, visit [here](#).

CMC Statement in Support of Institutional Nonpartisanship

CMC is a nonpartisan institution of higher education. To ensure the full freedom of faculty, students, and staff to express their views, the College shall refrain from establishing partisan institutional positions that are not directly related to its educational mission. In addition, CMC's Board of Trustees has endorsed the University of Chicago's [Kalven Report](#) as consistent with this [Statement in Support of Institutional Nonpartisanship](#).

CMC's Academic Departments

Government

History

The Robert Day School of Economics and Finance

Psychological Science

Philosophy

Literature

Military Science and Leadership

Kravis Department of Integrated Sciences

Religious Studies

Mathematical Sciences

Physical Education and Intercollegiate Athletics

Modern Languages and Literatures

For more details on CMC's academic departments, please visit [Academics: Departments, Majors and Programs | Claremont McKenna College](#)

CMC's Research Institutes

Berger Institute for Individual and Social Development

Advances research in individual and social development with the goal of promoting innovative solutions to critical social problems.

Kravis Leadership Institute (KLI)

Focuses on the promotion and understanding of responsible, innovative leadership and provides unique opportunities for CMC students to develop as outstanding real world leaders in the public, private and social sectors.

Roberts Environmental Center (REC)

Involves students in real-world environmental issues and trains them to analyze the issues from as broad a perspective as possible, taking science, economics, and policy into consideration.

Gould Center for Humanistic Studies

Promotes the study of humanities at CMC by providing opportunities for research, study, and experiences in literature, history, philosophy, religious studies, art, and other areas of humanistic inquiry.

Mgrublian Center for Human Rights (MCHR)

Instills in students an understanding of human rights as central to moral conduct and ethical decisions in their personal lives, in their careers and in the public arena.

Rose Institute of State and Local Government (The Rose)

Enhances the education of students at the Claremont Colleges, produces high quality research, and promotes public understanding on issues of state and local government, politics and policy, with an emphasis on California.

Financial Economics Institute (FEI)

Provides unique research, curricular and extracurricular opportunities engaging the Claremont Colleges in both the theory and practice of financial economics.

Randall Lewis Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship (CIE)

Helps prepare students to be thoughtful, productive, and responsible business leaders and innovators and supports curricular/co-curricular programming, including workshops, networking events, speakers, and internship programs.

Salvatori Center for Individual Freedom

Engages in the study of American Constitutionalism, the American Founding and political philosophy as it relates to liberal democracy.

Keck Center for International and Strategic Studies

Supports the study of critical issues in world affairs, sponsoring lecture series, conferences, research fellowships, academic travel opportunities, thesis fieldwork fellowships, research assistants, journalism lab, podcast program, student summer internships and professional development opportunities.

CMC's Glossary

The following refer to modern-day terms, campus locations, clubs, on-campus resources and traditions at CMC. There are many treasured memories from years past that have been memorialized in an online archive, accessed here: <https://cmcarchives.omeka.net/exhibits/show/foundingcmc/introduction>.

General Vocabulary

BAMA – A term for the Robert Day Scholar students in the Bachelor Masters Program.

CGU – Claremont Graduate University

CIRS – Claremont International Relations Society

CMC – Claremont McKenna College

CMCer – A student at Claremont McKenna College

CMS – An acronym for Claremont-Mudd-Scripps, which refers to the combined athletic teams among the three colleges.

CRESCIT CUM (CVM for formal use) COMMERCIO CIVITAS – This is CMC's motto. It means, "Civilization prospers with commerce."

DOF – Dean of the Faculty

DOS – Dean of Students

Dry Period – Prior to the start of the fall semester, all students are expected to remain sober. Dry period ends at 5:00 p.m. on the first day of classes, once all students are back on campus (not just incoming students and student leaders).

FYG – First-Year Guides are a select group of sophomores, juniors, and seniors that provide mentorship to incoming students. They lead W.O.A! groups and assist with the programming during orientation week.

FYGLETS – How First-Year Guides refer to their assigned freshman.

Intramurals – Also referred to as 'IMs.' Students are grouped together in teams by dorms and play a number of different sports, including basketball. One unique IM is innertube water polo where, you guessed it, students remain in innertubes while playing water polo.

KGI – Keck Graduate Institute is one of the graduate schools in the Claremont Colleges Consortium.

KLab – Kravis Lab for Social Impact

LTA – Lab Technology Assistants are stationed in the various computer labs across campus, supporting students with technology issues and questions.

PP – This refers to Pomona-Pitzer, usually in the context of athletics. The Pomona-Pitzer teams are rivals of the Claremont-Mudd-Scripps athletic program, also known as the "Sixth Street Rivalry."

Preview – A term that refers to the Admission Preview Program for prospective students who come to campus in the fall and spring semesters to see the College.

Prospie – A prospective student

Public Safety and Campus Safety – Public Safety is a CMC-based program specifically to make sure CMC is safe especially during social events. Campus Safety is a program provided by the overarching consortium to make sure everyone is safe.

RA – A Resident Assistant is typically a senior or 3+2 junior who helps guide dorm life and plan activities in each dorm. There are one or two RAs per dorm.

RDS – The Robert Day Scholars refer to a cohort of students that receive additional career support and pursue additional coursework in the areas of economics, finance, and leadership. There is also a small Master's program in Finance available from the RDS program.

RTA – The Resident Technology Assistant is a student designated to help others with various technological problems such as Wi-Fi onboarding, protecting data, and preventing malware from entering CMC's system. One lives in every dorm.

SIE – Sponsored Internships and Experiences is the amalgamation of various programs funneled through the Soll Center for Student Opportunity which allows for students to gain funding for various summer projects, internships, and programs.

TCCS – The Claremont Colleges Services is the overarching provider of consortium wide services such as Campus Security.

7C – This refers to the seven institutions that make up the Claremont Consortium, including Claremont McKenna College, Pomona College, Harvey Mudd College, Scripps College, Pitzer College, Keck Graduate Institute, and Claremont Graduate University.

Clubs & Campus Resources

Advocates – A student-led organization that serves as a resource for Sexual Assault survivors, outside of the Title IX office. They act as confidants to survivors (with non-mandatory reporting), and hosts a variety of focused seminars and activities about consent and healthy relationships.

APAM – Asian Pacific American Mentoring strives to mentor first-year and transfer students who self-identify as Asian, Pacific Islander, Desi- American, multiethnic, and/or multiracial (APIDA) by creating a community at CMC and by facilitating the discussion of APIDA issues.

ASCMC – The Associated Students of Claremont McKenna College is the student government on campus. The two bodies are the Executive Board (elected and appointed positions) and the Senate (open to all students). ASCMC plans all CMC official parties, provides funding for clubs and organizations, serves as a liaison between students and administration, among other things.

BSA – Black Student Alliance

The CARE Center – This stands for Civility, Access, Resources, and Expression, a campus center dedicated to “proactively engage and educate the community to develop the skills needed to have difficult conversations, identify with one another across social barriers or ideological difference, and engage in effective dialogue towards solutions and resolutions.”

Claremont Consulting Group – CCG is a student-run, revenue-generating management consulting firm equipping CMC students with experience working on high-impact projects for a wide array of cross-industry clients.

CBG – Claremont Business Group

CPB - College Programming Board organizes and sponsors fun, free events Thursday-Saturday from painting to excursions to sporting events.

CLSA – Chicano Latino Student Affairs, a group that serves all five colleges.

CMG – Claremont Marketing Group

CPB – The College Programming Board focuses on dry activities and events, such as a trip to Disneyland, terrarium-making, etc.

CWPD - Center for Writing and Public Discourse provides assistance and help with writing and oral communication.

EmPower Center - A 7C resource that works as the sexual violence and advocacy center of the Claremont Colleges.

The Enigma of Pleasure – A sculpture by Carol Bove that was commissioned for CMC. It is located north of Collins and includes scrap metal left in its rusted state, folded, and crushed steel that has been painted orange, and includes a highly polished black steel disc.

MCAPS – Monsour Counseling and Psychological Services is a consortium-wide program to help students with mental health counseling, referrals to mental health professionals outside of the Claremont system, support groups for various sudden events that may occur.

Mi Gente – A CMC-based resource for students who identify as Latinx

MUN – This refers to CMC’s award-winning Model United Nations Team.

OBSA – The Office of Black Student Affairs is located on Pomona’s Campus.

OI – This stands for Outdoor Initiative, an on-campus club that specializes in outdoor programming such as camping, hiking, surfing, etc.

Scholar Communities – A program that support small, experiential learning cohorts designed to assist students in harnessing the full spectrum of support available to students during their four-year journey at CMC.

SIF – The Student Investment Fund is a student-run investment firm working with part of the CMC endowment and providing professional experience to students looking to work in financial services.

SGA – Sexuality and Gender Alliance

Soll Center for Student Opportunities – Home to the Career Services Center and the scholar communities offices. This is located across from the Hub.

1GEN – The club is dedicated to act as a support group and resource for first-generation students to help them prosper during their time at CMC and beyond using FOUR pillars: academic, professional, social, and mentorship.

Campus Locations

The Ath - Unique in American higher education, the Marian Miner Cook Athenaeum is a signature program of CMC. Four nights a week during the school year, “the Ath” brings scholars, public figures, thought leaders, artists, and innovators to engage with the CMC and Claremont College community. In addition, the Ath also hosts lunch speakers, roundtables, and smaller presentations in its two auxiliary dining rooms.

Beckett Beach / Beckett Outdoor Fire Place – This outdoor area is located between Beckett and Story House. It is a popular hangout spot.

The Bubble – A popular meeting space for students, particularly for clubs and activities.

BVB – An acronym that refers to the conjoined mid-quad residence hall building that includes Berger, Valach, and Benson.

The Cage – This refers to the Student Event Plaza where parties such as the Barn Party (which usually take place in fall semester) are held. Located next to the portable Keck Center classrooms, behind the golf practice space.

The Cave – This refers to the student-run music room in Marks Hall basement. You can find instruments such as guitars, pianos, and drums down there, as well as a recording studio.

Claremont Hall – Prior to receiving an official name, new dormitories on CMC’s campus are referred to as ‘Claremont Hall.’ Different generations of CMCers will refer to different dorms as Claremont Hall (e.g. a 2011 grad will know Crown Hall as Claremont Hall, while a 1982 grad will know Auen as Claremont Hall).

CHall – An abbreviation for Claremont Hall. It is now Valach Hall, but students may use that acronym for a while.

Challesium – Located behind Chall, there is a small amphitheatre-esque patio area commonly used for student gathering, club meetings, and parties.

The College

Cretaceous – A sculpture located north of Collins Dining Hall. It is one of four art pieces by Carol Bove on CMC’s campus. It is made from rusted mild (low carbon) steel and ancient petrified wood.

‘Dark Side’ of a North Quad Dorm – This refers to the areas that face north on all North Quad rooms.

Four Loops – This is an art piece by Carol Bove. It is located just north of Collins Dining Hall. The piece features a white, looping tubular glyph.

Green Beach – The grassy hill that leads from the south side of Green Hall into Parents Field. A number of parties are held here.

Heggblade – The location of the Dean of Students Office and the CARE Center, which is next to McKenna Auditorium.

Heggblade Annex – Lounge available for student group reservations and houses supplemental counseling spaces and a small prayer/meditation room.

The Hub – This is located in the Emmet Student Center. The Hub is an all-hours student gathering place where you can order food, buy snacks, play pool, or study. Includes both indoor seating as well as a patio.

Lingam – An art piece by Carol Bove, which is located north of Collins Dining Hall. It is made of steel I-beams and 16-million-year old petrified wood.

The Massoud – The glass structure located in front of the Kravis Center. The Massoud was previously known as the Kravis Living Room. It is also colloquially referred to as the ‘Kube.’

Meet in the Middle – This is an art installation by artist, Chris Burden. Located next to the Roberts Pavilion, it features street lights and benches placed in concentric circles.

Mid Quad – This refers to the following group of dormitories: Beckett, Benson, Berger, Valach, Crown, Marks, and Phillips Halls.

Modified Social Benches – This is an art installation by Danish artist, Jeppe Hein. It is located outside Adams Hall, with a view of the Kravis Center and Athenaeum. These brightly colored red benches have become a spot for students to meet and relax.

North Quad – This refers to the following group of dormitories: Green, Appleby, Boswell, & Wohlford Halls.

Parents – The field located south of Green Hall.

Poppa – A computer lab on campus located in Adams Hall.

QCL – The Murthy Sunak Quantitative Computing Lab is an on-campus lab for students to receive help in various analytical classes such as calculus, statistics, or coding topics such as Java and Python programming languages.

Qwalala – The name of a public art installation on CMC’s campus, located in Mid Quad, just north of Marks Hall. Artist Pae White (a Scripps alum) created the 250-foot-long illuminated glass sculpture.

Roberts – Roberts Pavilion is the on-campus athletic center.

Ryal – A computer lab located in Phillips Hall.

South Lab – A computer lab located in Stark Hall.

South Quad – This refers to the following group of dormitories: Auen, Fawcett and Stark Halls. Note, Stark Hall is substance free.

Student Apartments – Today, they are referred to as the student apartments, but because seniors have always had better room draw numbers than undergrads, they typically select the apartments first.

Totem – This art installation by Ellsworth Kelly is located just north of Phillips Hall. It is a 40-foot, white-painted, stainless steel sculpture.

0o0o – This is one of the new art installations, officially titled “Four Loops” created by Carol Bove. It is located outside of Collins Dining Hall and McKenna Auditorium.

Off-Campus Locations

AK – This refers to Alexan Kendry, which is overflow housing for CMC students 1.5 miles from campus. About 85 students are housed at AK.

CMC Shuttle – A shuttle bus that takes students to and from campus and the off-campus apartments. Students pick it up from Collins to AK from 7 a.m. to one hour post quiet hours daily.

Dom’s Lounge – Basement lounge located on Pomona’s campus underneath the Smith Campus Center, where a few parties are located.

Jay’s Place – Harvey Mudd’s equivalent of the Hub, open until all hours, and serves items such as pizza and hoagies.

Motley – This refers to the Scripps-run coffee shop located in Seal Court.

Seal Court – Seal Court – A central courtyard on Scripps’ campus where Seal Pond, an outdoor fountain is located. It is also next to the Mallot Dining Hall and is the patio for the Motley coffee cafe.

SHS – This refers to the Robert Tranquada Student Health Center, which is located next to the Honnold-Mudd Library.

The Village – The Claremont Village is a 10-minute walk from campus. There are a number of restaurants, coffee shops, and other local stores (and a great Sunday Farmer’s Market).

Traditions

Athenaeum “Ath” Tea – The Athenaeum serves tea and coffee Monday through Friday from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. It is best-known for serving chocolate covered strawberries and homemade Rice Krispy treats. It’s a casual affair – students, faculty, and staff will stop by for a quick pick-me-up before and after classes.

Club Claremont – A party in memory of Eli Mirza.

“Happy Birthday!” – Students will wish the student admission tour guides a “Happy Birthday!” as they pass them while they are giving prospective students and families tours of campus, even though it’s not their birthday.

Holiday Dinner – This elaborate feast takes place in Collins Dining Hall just prior to the end of the fall semester.

Pirate Party – A major party that occurs in the Spring. It typically includes a large blow up slide, food trucks and musical acts.

Ponding – On their birthday, CMCers are carried by their friends to the Flamson Plaza Fountain where they are ceremoniously “ponded” by being dropped into the fountain.

Thesis Party – At the completion of senior thesis (both at the end of the fall and spring semesters), a party takes place around Flamson Plaza. Seniors are given a bottle of champagne. Steer clear of the party, there’s water involved.

TNC – Thursday Night Club is a party that takes place every Thursday and is typically hosted by a different dorm.

100 Days or 200 Days – These seniors-only parties occur 100 and 200 days out from graduation. They take place off-campus.

Monte Carlo Night – In the fall, ASCMC plans a formal casino night for all students. It typically coincides with Homecoming.

6:01 Party – This is the first party of the year at CMC, usually hosted on the first Saturday of the semester.

Sixth Street Rivalry – This refers to the Claremont-Mudd-Scripps (CMS) and Pomona-Pitzer (PP) rivalry. “Sixth Street” demarcates the physical split between the campuses (although Pitzer is north of Sixth).

There is also a ‘Sixth Street Rivalry’ trophy that is passed between the CMS and PP football teams depending on who wins that particular year.

Wedding Party – A party that happens during the Spring semester. It is a formal affair and includes a mock wedding between two people.

W.O.A.! or ‘Welcome Orientation Adventure’ – All incoming students participate in W.O.A.!, which is a pre-orientation program in which students travel to off-campus cabin or beach camping locations with their First-Year Guides. The trips allow incoming students to develop friendships and get a sense for the college community before the formal start of their college careers.

WOAmie – Your fellow W.O.A.! group members.