

Campus Field Report – University of Akron

Date of Report: 2016

Address: 302 Buchtel Common, Akron, Ohio 44325

Traditional Undergraduate Students: 19,710 (23,962 total)

Phone: 330-972-7111

E-Mail:

Web: www.uakron.edu



Introduction

The University of Akron is a public research university located on the edge of downtown Akron, Ohio. The university is part of the University System of Ohio and is known nationally for its polymer research. As a STEM-focused institution, it focuses on industries such as polymers, advanced materials, and engineering. Its destination programs are Business, Engineering, and Nursing.

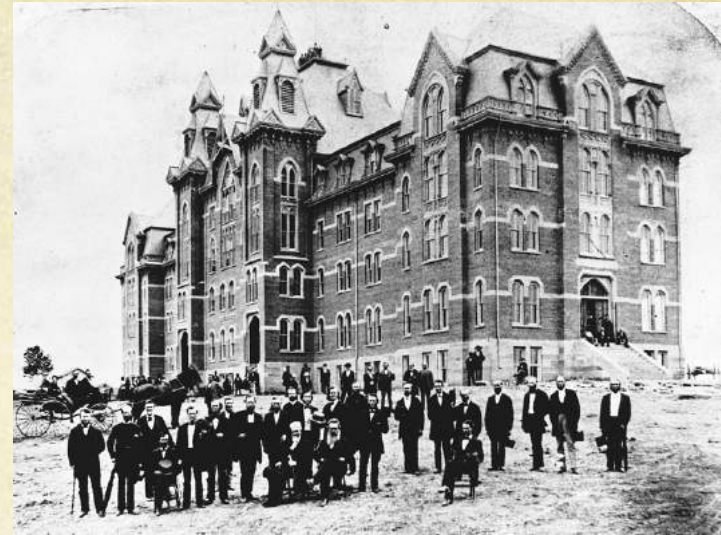
The University of Akron offers about 200 undergraduate and more than 100 graduate majors. With an enrollment of approximately 27,000 students from throughout Ohio, the United States, and 71 foreign countries, the University of Akron is one of the largest principal campuses in Ohio.



History

In 1867, at the annual convention of the Universalist Church of the state of Ohio, the Committee on Education expressed an interest in founding a college compatible with Universalist religious principles. John R. Buchtel, a prominent Akron businessman and Universalist, promptly contributed \$25,000 to the endowment fund and \$6,000 to the building fund. This led other Akronites to donate, setting the goal and securing Akron as the location for Buchtel College, named after its greatest supporter. John R. Buchtel continued to be the college's most significant contributor, giving \$500,000 over his lifetime, approximately equivalent to \$16 million today. When the university opened in 1872 it was a single-building campus, housed in what is now known as "Old Buchtel."

Tragedy struck the small college on December 20, 1899, when Old Buchtel burned to the ground. Insurance only covered \$65,000 of the estimated \$100,000 in loss. While new campus buildings were being constructed, the Crouse Gymnasium was divided into seven classrooms and served as the college until a new Buchtel Hall was opened in 1901. The new Buchtel Hall, which itself was gutted by fire in 1971, survives to this day but had some blackening on the exterior up until a 2011 restoration.



The newly built Buchtel College is shown here in 1872



Buchtel Common today

History (Cont.)

In 1907, the college shed its Universalist affiliation and became a non-denominational institution, in order to be able to receive funds from the Carnegie Foundation, which would not give funds to religiously affiliated schools. In 1913, Buchtel College trustees transferred the institution and its assets to the city of Akron, and Buchtel College became the Municipal University of Akron. At this time, the enrollment was 198 students. Tax money levied for the school and Akron's growing population led to strong growth for the university. Over the next several decades the university continued to add new buildings to accommodate its growing student population, acquiring more land through purchases and donations. In 1963, Governor Jim Rhodes approved the university as a state-assisted institution. Enrollment in 1964 was 10,000 students. In 1967, it fully became a state university, providing its current name as The University of Akron.

(*Copied with slight modification from
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Akron)



John Buchtel in front of Buchtel
Common today.

ROTC

University of Akron offers Air Force ROTC and Army ROTC programs.



Academics

The university offers about 200 undergraduate majors. The student/faculty ratio is 19:1 and 72% of undergraduate classes have less than 30 students enrolled.

The University of Akron currently offers more than 100 graduate degrees to its current population of nearly 3,6000 graduate students. The University of Akron School of Law was founded in 1921 as Akron Law School and became affiliated with the University in 1959, becoming fully accredited by the American Bar Association in 1961. It has both day and evening full-time and part-time programs that lead to the J.D. and LL.M.

The University of Akron comprises the following colleges, schools, and campuses:

- Buchtel College of Arts and Sciences
- College of Business Administration
- LeBron James Family Foundation College of Education
- College of Engineering
- College of Health Professions, including the School of Nursing
- School of Law
- College of Polymer Science & Polymer Engineering



A large, lecture classroom at
UA

Academics (Cont.)

Unique Majors

Print Making (BFA)

Jewelry and Metalsmithing (BFA)

Integrated Marketing Communication

Fashion Merchandising

Financial Planning

Aerospace Systems Engineering

Natural Science with a Polymer Science (Concentration)

Polymer Chemistry

Corrosion Engineering

Engineering Geology

Sales Management (+ Prof. Selling minor)

Respiratory Therapy

Surveying and Mapping

Speech Language Pathology & Audiology

Emergency Management and Homeland Security

Graduate Degrees (just a few)

BS/MD Bachelor of Science to MD (6 years)

Arts Administration

Audiology

Business Analytics

Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Engineering (various)

Geology (various)

Law

Financial Forensics (JD + MS Accountancy)

Higher Ed Admin.

Polymer Chemistry

Large Majors:

The largest undergraduate program at UA is Business Administration. The top fifteen most popular majors are:

Business Administration

Engineering

Education

Nursing

Accounting

Psychology

Social Work

Marketing

Biology

Sport Studies

Criminal Justice

Public Relations

Speech Language Pathology &
Audiology

Graphic Design

Dance

Athletic Trainer

Geology

Academics (Cont.)

Destination Majors

1. Polymer Chemistry and Polymer Engineering - The tire and rubber industry and the University of Akron have an overlapping history. Historically, several large corporations, such as Goodyear, Firestone, and Goodrich, had their headquarters in Akron. In 1909, the world's first courses in rubber chemistry were offered at the University. The University is also credited with featuring the first College of Polymer Science and Polymer Engineering in the world, which was founded in 1988. The National Polymer Innovation Center was unveiled at a groundbreaking ceremony on September 14, 2009. The 42,750-square-foot center houses 10 laboratories equipped with state-of-the-art research instruments and a multipurpose-processing high-bay area designed for the installation of prototype manufacturing apparatus. The \$13.2 million building is fully funded with state dollars through the Ohio Third Frontier initiative.



Polymer Engineering
Academic Center

Academics (Cont.)

Destination Majors

- Engineering – Engineering programs at UA are extremely strong. They say they are “hard to get into and even harder to get out of.” A variety of engineering majors are available including Aerospace Systems, Biomedical, Chemical, Civil, Computer, Corrosion, Electrical, and Mechanical. Many students choose to participate in a paid Co-Op program and work in industry during the spring of their junior year and fall of their senior year. While this extends time to graduation, pay is high and students graduate with experience and, often, multiple job offers. Overall, engineers enjoy a 96% job placement rate upon graduation. Classes are taught in a newly renovated building.
 - Aerospace Systems Engineering - This recently launched program, among the first of its kind, is designed to train engineers to become future project managers and program managers for the aerospace industry
 - Biomedical Engineers conduct research and study the engineering aspects of biological systems to create new devices and procedures to improve health and quality of life.
 - Mechanical Engineering – Students interested in automotive engineering may join one of the award-winning Society of Automotive Engineers design competition teams – Supermileage, Aero Design, Formula Race Car and Mini Baja.
 - Corrosion Engineering is one of the first such programs in the U.S.

Academics (Cont.)

Destination Majors

- Business – All Business majors at UA are AACSB accredited. This specialty business accreditor is highly regarded and considered the most coveted accreditation for business programs nationally. This department boasts an 85% job placement rate immediately following graduation. Possible majors include Accounting, Business Administration, Economics, Finance (including Financial Planning), International Business, Management (including Human Resources, Information Systems, and Supply Chain), and Marketing (including Sales Management and Integrated Marketing Communications).
 - Many Accounting majors take advantage of the 5 year BS/MS in Accounting Program that allows students to pick up an undergraduate and graduate degree in Accounting while completing the 150 credit hours required to sit for the CPA exam.
 - The Financial Planning major qualifies a student to sit for the CFP (Certified Financial Planning) Exam
- Nursing – The nursing program at UA boasts a 93% first time pass rate for the NCLEX exam. Clinical rotations begin in a student's second year in the program. The program has a full-scale simulation lab mimics an actual hospital. Students can't direct admit into Nursing, but apply during their first year. There are 30-35 spots open per year and a minimum GPA of 2.75 is required for consideration.

Academics (Cont.)

Majors of Note

- Art – The Myer School of Art major options include Art Education, Art History, Ceramics, Graphic Design, Jewelry and Metalsmithing, Painting and Drawing, Photography, Printmaking, Sculpture, and Studio Art. As a named school they have an endowment that specifically supports student travel, faculty professional development and visiting artist programs. They also have a fully integrated Art and Design undergraduate school. Students and faculty work cross discipline. The Akron Art Museum, Cleveland Museum of Art and Canton Museum of art are close. Graphic Design is the largest art major. A variety of art-related student organizations also support students.
- Music – Majors include Composition, Jazz Studies, Music Education, and Performance (Accompanying, Brass, Guitar, Percussion, Piano, Strings, Voice, and Woodwinds).
- Political Science – UA offers a 3+3 program with their Law School where a student can complete their undergraduate degree in Political Science and JD in a total of 6 years.
- Pre-Med – UA has an articulated agreement with Northeastern Ohio Medical University. They have 11 reserved seats annually reserved for UA students and the program is a 3+4, so students can complete their undergraduate degree and an MD in a total of 7 years.

Academics (Cont.)

Majors of Note

- Education – UA has one of the oldest teacher preparation programs in Ohio. Field study in actual classrooms begins during a student's first year. Education is housed in a new state-of-the-art building partially funded by the LeBron James Family Foundation. The program has a strong learning technology component with an undergraduate certificate in Instructional Technology is available
- Nutrition and Dietetics – Multiple tracks are available for students in this accredited program. Over the past five years on the national Dietetic Registration Examination, graduates of the coordinated program have achieved a 93 percent pass rate. The University of Akron Nutrition Center provides students hands on experience.



UA Nutrition Center

Academic Support for Physical and Learning Challenges

While UA doesn't have any unique programs supporting students with learning challenges, they do offer a number of academic support services. For example, they have a Student Success Division where students have access to free tutoring as well as a Math and Writing Center that helps students master mathematical concepts and review papers. The Office of Disability Services provides reasonable accommodations for students with documentable disabilities.



Life Outside the Classroom

UA sits on the edge of downtown Akron, making its arts scene, street festivals minor league sports, and music venues easily available. Downtown is only a 5 minute walk.

UA offers over 300 student organizations and intramural sports. Organizations have a wide scope, with plenty of options related to academics, hobbies, politics, faith, film, music, sports, and others. Intramurals include dodge ball, flag football, floor hockey, sand volleyball, futsal, softball, and more. UA also offers club sports including hockey, soccer, lacrosse, tennis, rugby, wrestling and others.

There is a first year requirement that students live on campus unless the student's family lives nearby. There are a wide variety of housing options at UA including traditional style residence halls, apartment style living, and others. There are a total of 10 residence halls and 4 private apartments on campus serving 3,000 students. They also offer 20 living/learning housing communities where students with similar interests are grouped together and programming is provided around their shared interests. Examples include Engineering, Pre-Med, Outdoor Adventure, Emerging Leaders, and ROTC.

UA offers students a number of dining options. Robertson Café (Rob's) is the main dining hall on campus offering a wide variety of cafeteria style options. In the Student Center alone, students can also choose Panda, Qdoba, Chik-Fil-A, and Einstein Bagels. There are 4 Starbucks on campus.

UA's Student Recreation and Wellness Center offers gym space, workout space, weights, rock climbing, and even a lazy river.

Life Outside the Classroom

The University of Akron's athletic teams are known as the "Zips," originally short for "Zippers," overshoes that were nationally popular in the 1920s and 1930s, and the zipper was an invention from Akron. The university's mascot is "Zippy," a kangaroo, who is one of only eight female college mascots in the United States. The AK Rowdies are a student spirit group – you got it – faces painted, front row, Zip gear, goin' crazy! The JAR (James Rhodes Arena) is where Zip basketball and volleyball teams compete and students get free admission.

The University of Akron is home to more than twenty fraternities and sororities. The University is working to create a Greek Village and are completing three house renovations at the time of this writing. There are 14 fraternities and 6 sororities – around 750 active members in all.



Student Recreation and Wellness
Center

Price

Estimated Costs for Academic Year 2015-2016

Tuition	\$ 5,382 (10,509-5,127*)
Room & Board	\$ 11,322
Books/Supplies	<u>\$ 1,000</u>
Total	\$17,704

Pell Grant Eligible: 39%

Merit aid is offered automatically, and most students receive \$2,000-\$7,000 per year. Honors college adds an additional \$500 per year but requires a 3.5 high school GPA and 27 ACT.

* Average Merit Scholarship is based on data provided by the National Center for Educational Statistics and is only an estimate. Actual cost will vary by student and is subject to change by the University of Akron.

Just for Fun

The Rock

The Rock is an 8-ton gray boulder that is 7 feet tall, 5 feet wide and 3 feet thick, containing 90 cubic feet of igneous rock known as syenite. Buchtel College, forerunner of UA, was only eight years old when the Class of 1880 went to great expense and effort to haul the landmark to the school's lawn. The Rock stood for nearly 80 years before it was first painted (around 1960). Now, 55 years and 3,500 cans of spray paint later, four inches of paint were removed when the rock was restored back to its original state exposing the engraved "1880" on May 20, 2015.



The Rock

The Heisman Connection

Legendary college football coach **John Heisman**, of Heisman Trophy fame, earned a place in UA history very early in his career. Heisman arrived at Buchtel College in 1893 to teach men's physical education and coach. Under his watch, the football team posted its first winning season ever with a 5-2 record. Before Heisman left in 1894, he gave UA another first — it's one and only win over Ohio State during a tournament at the state fair in Columbus. He coached and played quarterback, leading UA to a 12-6 victory. Heisman gave the game such innovations as double laterals, the forward pass and the shotgun-style center snap — a move he created right on Buchtel Field.



John Heisman

University of Akron Data Sheet*

Fall 2014 Enrollment

Undergraduate Enrollment (79% Full Time)	19,710
Graduate Student Enrollment	4,252
Percentage UG Men	53%
Percentage UG Women	47%
Percentage UG Minorities (2% Hispanic, 13% AA)	26%
% Out-of-State (1% International)	7%
Average Class Size	25-30
Student to Faculty Ratio	19:1
Number of full-time faculty	889

Fall 2014 Freshman Profile

Middle 50% ACT Composite	19-26
Number in freshman class	4,300

Campus Life

Religious Affiliation	Public
Campus Setting	Urban
Fraternities/Sororities	Yes
Intramural Sports	Yes
% full-time students living on campus	17%
Percent registered w/disability services	3%

Athletics

NCAA Division I-A

Varsity Sports

Men: Basketball, Cross Country, Football, Golf, Track, Rifle (Co-Ed), and Soccer

Women: Basketball, Cross Country, Golf, Track, Rifle, Soccer Softball, Swimming and Diving, Tennis, Volleyball

* Data provided by the National Center for Educational Statistics, 2015-2016 Counselors Guide by the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Ohio, Forbes "Private College Financial Health Grades 2015," and the 2015 Endowment Market Value by the National Association of College and University Business Officers and Commonfund Institute.

University of Akron Data Sheet*

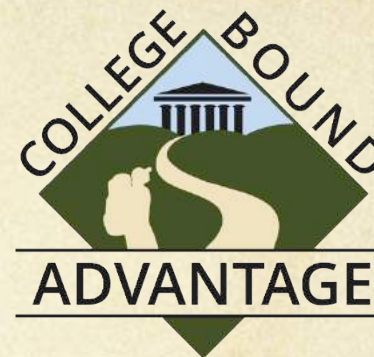
Academics

First to Second Year Retention	74%
Six Year Ave. Graduation Rate	42%

Financial Health

2015 Endowment	\$238,000,000
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Note: In 2015, the university removed over 200 positions as the result of a \$6 million budget deficit. Subsequently in May 2016, Moody's Investors Service, downgraded the university's bonds from stable to negative, because of low enrollment and high debts and pension burdens.¹⁹



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