

Profile and Character of the College

Founded in 1887, McPherson College is a private, residential, four-year, career-oriented liberal arts college. The college's mission is to develop whole persons through scholarship, participation, and service. This mission leads the college to stress on-campus residency for traditional-age students as a means for encouraging participation and community involvement. The college offers the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees in 23 academic majors and a Master of Education degree with emphases in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) or high-incidence Special Education.

McPherson is a member of the Kansas Collegiate Athletic Conference, competing in seven intercollegiate sports for men and seven intercollegiate sports for women. Although full-time enrollment has historically averaged little more than 425 students, in recent years it has approached 700. The teaching faculty includes 46 full-time professors, more than three-quarters of whom hold terminal degrees. A 14:1 student-faculty ratio offers a personalized education tailored to students' needs. Year in and year out, McPherson College is at or near the top among private Kansas colleges in the diversity of its student body. With 30 percent students of color, 40 percent women, more than 50 percent of students from out-of-state, and an international population now nearing 10 percent, McPherson is a vibrant community of learners consisting of rural and urban students and a wide variety of ethnic and faith backgrounds.

McPherson has a reputation for integrating excellent academic programs with career-preparation. The accrediting team that came to campus in December 2014 and extended the college's accreditation through 2024, had special praise for the college's senior capstone curriculum. They wrote: "The Team was very impressed with the Capstone program at McPherson and even more impressed with the diversity of programs and the number of students participating.... The Capstone experience utilized by all programs is excellent." One hundred percent of 2017 McPherson College graduates who applied were accepted into graduate and professional schools. The accreditation team was similarly impressed with McPherson's experiential learning curriculum: "Though not as promoted as the Capstone experience," the team wrote, "the internship program of McPherson is impressive." In 2016-17, 75 percent of graduating seniors had completed at least one internship, and 63 percent of the same graduating class had secured jobs before commencement (compared to a national average of 18 percent).

McPherson College is affiliated with the Church of the Brethren but is independent of the denomination and welcomes faculty and students from all faith traditions. The college values its roots in the church and nurtures them, striving as an institution to model the Brethren values of ethical behavior, simple lifestyles, non-violence and peace, respect for the environment and all living creatures, and the expression of faith through service. In 2016-17, 528 McPherson College students participated in community service projects, averaging more than 11.5 hours of service per student.