Students say “...”

Academics
Students at the University of California—Riverside are in love with many things—the “small class size” and “beautiful campus” come up often—but the educators here receive the lion’s share of the praise. Professors here are “very skilled in teaching” and “have passion to teach and help their students.” Teachers “don’t just read from a book and teach you the stuff, they also bring the material to life and make class really enjoyable.” This is because they “really know the material they are teaching and are very passionate about it,” resulting in “lively discussions” and an “open and diverse campus.” This is a school that is devoted to “helping students achieve their academic goals while at the same time connecting them to their community.” Some students admit their “overall academic experience has had its ups and downs,” saying, “Some classes were interesting and structured well, while others were not,” but by and large, educators are “willing to dedicate an enormous amount of time to interact with and help students in order for us to succeed.” Career-minded students will find that counselors here are “more than willing to help you with your career path,” and the school also “has great connections and support, which is vital for creating a network that helps with internships and future jobs in your major.” Graduates of UCR “have integrity, accountability, excellence, and respect.”

Life
It’s not hard to make friends at UCR, “but I know it would’ve been easier if I tried joining a club or organization,” one student comments, which comes as no surprise, since “many students are involved in campus clubs and organizations.” It’s easy to find activities for the student who looks, since “there is always an event going on such as athletic games, plays, and musical shows.” Students here “aren’t under extreme pressure,” so they manage to “find the time to explore our own interests and ideas with others.” School-based clubs and organizations may be the option of choice, however, since “Riverside city isn’t the prettiest, and it gets ridiculously hot during the summer.” That said, some students think that “downtown Riverside is beautiful,” and UCR students like going there to “go ice skating or shopping at the various malls.” Outdoorsy types will be glad to know that the “weather is awesome,” and “the beaches are an hour away, and so are the mountains and desert in opposite directions.” Active students say, “It’s always nice to travel, hike, camp, and just have fun with friends.”

Student Body
The active, community-focused students of UCR are “usually part of at least one extracurricular group,” the result of “a diverse student body anxious to learn about the world and what they can do to make the world a better place.” Though UCR’s campus can’t be called cozy, it is small enough that “everyone knows everyone through at least one connection.” The typical student is “friendly, engaging, outgoing, and eager to learn.” Those attending almost universally report that making friends here is easy “because the acceptance level at UCR [among students] is 100 percent.” The school “is like a giant melting pot; every student is different but we all fit together perfectly.” Getting involved in social causes is not unusual among the student body, though “a typical student is always more worried about their outfits than politics and social issues,” which isn’t to say many aren’t driven by such causes. One student reports, “I like to organize forums and participate in social justice rallies on and off campus.” Overall, though, laid-back and inviting is the rule of the day. “Students fit in by being who they are because everyone is friendly,” and they “always attend classes, go to org meetings, and campus events, and make it home in time to do four to five hours of studying.”
THE PRINCETON REVIEW SAYS

Admissions
Very important factors considered include: GPA, rigor of secondary school record, standardized test scores, application essay. Other factors considered include: Extracurricular activities, first generation, state residency, talent/ability, volunteer work, work experience, character/personal qualities. SAT or ACT required; ACT with Writing component required. TOEFL required of all international applicants. Academic units required: 4 English; 3 mathematics; 2 science; (2 science lab); 2 foreign language; 2 history; 1 academic elective; 1 visual/performing arts. Academic units recommended: 4 mathematics; 3 science; (3 science lab); 3 foreign language.

Financial Aid
Students should submit: FAFSA, State aid form. Regular filing deadline is 5/1.
The Princeton Review suggests that all financial aid forms be submitted as soon as possible after January 1. Need-based scholarships/grants offered: Federal Pell, SEOG; State scholarships/grants, private scholarships, the school’s own gift aid. Loan aid offered: Direct Subsidized Stafford Loans, Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loans, Direct PLUS loans, Federal Perkins Loans, College/university loans from institutional funds. Applicants will be notified of awards beginning 3/1. Federal Work-Study Program available. Institutional employment available. Off-campus job opportunities are excellent.

The Inside Word
The UC—Riverside admissions process is based heavily on quantitative factors. Applicants who have strong GPAs and standardized test scores should have no problem gaining acceptance. There is a priority filing period, so students should apply as early as possible.

THE SCHOOL SAYS “...”

From the Admissions Office
“The University of California—Riverside offers the quality, rigor, and facilities of a major research institution, while assuring its undergraduates personal attention and a sense of community. Academic programs, teaching, advising, and student services all reflect the supportive attitudes that characterize the campus. Among the exceptional opportunities are the Thomas Haider Program in Biomedical Sciences, which provides an exclusive path to medical school: the University Honors Program, an extensive undergraduate research program, UC’s largest undergraduate program is psychology, and UC’s only bachelor’s degree in creative writing. Additionally, the opening of UCR’s School of Medicine is anticipated for August 2013. More than 300 student clubs and organizations and a variety of athletic and arts events give students a myriad of ways to get involved and have fun.

“Effective fall 2012, all applicants must take the ACT plus writing or the SAT Reasoning Test. The SAT Subject Tests will no longer be required for admission; however, students interested in admission to any major in the College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences or the Bourns College of Engineering are strongly recommended to take the SAT Subject Test math level 2 and the SAT Subject Test in chemistry or physics.”