

SKIDMORE

OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM (HEOP/AOP) AT SKIDMORE



For more than 40 years, Skidmore's Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) has been **one of the most successful in New York State**. HEOP recruits talented and motivated students from New York whose academic and financial circumstances would make them otherwise unable to attend Skidmore. The Academic Opportunity Program (AOP), Skidmore's own program, recruits similar students who reside out of state and/or whose family income slightly exceeds HEOP guidelines. Both programs, HEOP and AOP, are collectively referred to as the Opportunity Program (OP) at Skidmore.

The Opportunity Program provides **highly personalized academic, financial, and counseling services**, beginning with a required summer program at Skidmore prior to the first year. The Summer Academic Institute strengthens students' academic and study skills and familiarizes them with the Skidmore environment, building a solid foundation for a successful four-year career.

Currently, nearly 170 Opportunity Program students attend Skidmore (5% of the student body). The College is proud of its remarkable Opportunity Program grade-point average and graduation rates. In fact, **Skidmore's program is seen as a national model**, having been recognized by the Institute for the Study of Social Change's Consortium for High Academic Performance at the University of California at Berkeley. Skidmore's OP graduates—almost 500 in all—have gone on to successful careers in business, education, human services, medicine, publishing, and more. The College's Office of Career Development and Multicultural Alumni Network have been instrumental in launching many of these postcollege careers.

Recent Opportunity Program internships and fellowships:

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| Global Foundries | Name Bubbles |
| AYCO | Office of Congressman Scott Murphy |
| InRoads | Office of New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg |
| Time Inc. | National Institutes of Health |
| State Farm Insurance | Fulbright |
| New World Foundation | |
| Coin Internships | |

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Creative Thought Matters





THE SUMMER PROGRAM

The 4.5-week Summer Academic Institute is a **cornerstone of Opportunity Program student success**. The staff works closely with Skidmore faculty and the Registrar in designing an intense but supportive academic experience. Students earn Skidmore grades and up to six academic credits. As a bridge program, the Institute underscores the seriousness of academics, introduces students to Skidmore standards and future expectations, and fosters engagement and a will to achieve. Just as important, a close mentoring and advising relationship is started. At summer celebration dinners, students often speak of how the program fostered their individual and group accomplishments, sense of community, and personal and academic self-confidence.

The Opportunity Program offers **comprehensive support**. OP staff members (all required to give academic support across the disciplines) pay especially close attention to first-year students. They review faculty academic evaluations in the fourth and eighth weeks of each semester. These reports, as well as frequent contact with the students, guide them in making recommendations about tutors, faculty mentors, and future course work. In later years, as students choose and pursue a major, faculty in their major largely handle academic guidance; however, OP staff continue to provide mentoring, guidance, and academic support when needed. Other College offices are also valuable resources, including Career Development, Student Academic Services, Student Diversity Programs, and the College Chaplain.

Outside the classroom, the Opportunity Program office provides a **warm, welcoming atmosphere**. Through informal conversation among staff members and peers, students can share insights and discover interests and opportunities. They're welcome—even encouraged—to telephone staff members outside school hours. Special events, such as dinners at staff members' homes, foster a nurturing college experience. Simply put, the staff offers friendship as well as tutoring and counseling, providing a personal connection to the Skidmore community as a whole.

Recent Opportunity Program study-abroad locations:

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| Australia | France (Paris) | Mexico |
| Brazil | Ghana | South Africa |
| China | India | Spain (Madrid) |
| Czech Republic | Italy | Swaziland |
| Denmark | Japan | Switzerland |
| England (London) | | |

Recent Opportunity Program summer jobs:

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|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| National Park Service | <i>Teen People Magazine</i> |
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Recent grad schools attended by Opportunity Program students:

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|---|--------------------------------------|
| Albany College of Pharmacy | Stony Brook |
| American University | Thomas Jefferson School of Law |
| Ball State | Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth |
| Columbia | University of Chicago |
| Florida International University College of Law | University of Illinois |
| Fordham | University of Pennsylvania |
| Harvard | University of Tennessee |
| Notre Dame | |

