

The City University of New York (CUNY), the nation's largest urban public university, is comprised of twenty-three institutions: eleven senior colleges, six community colleges, an honors college, a graduate school, a graduate school of journalism, a school of law, a school of professional studies, and a school of biomedical education. The University serves more than 226,000 degree-credit students and 230,000 adult, continuing, and professional education students. College Now, the University's academic enrichment program for 32,500 high school students is offered at CUNY campuses and more than 280 high schools throughout the five boroughs of the City of New York. The University has launched an on-line baccalaureate degree through the School of Professional Studies, and a new Teacher Academy offering free tuition for highly motivated mathematics and science majors who seek teaching careers in the city's public schools.

Although the University was created in 1961, its history dates back to 1847, when City College was established. Its mission today is as it was then, to "educate the whole people"—to uphold a commitment to academic excellence while providing equal access to and opportunity for education. Over the years, other public colleges joined City College: Hunter College (1870), Brooklyn College (1930), Queens College (1937), New York City College of Technology, founded as New York City College (1947), the College of Staten Island, founded as Staten Island Community College (1955), Bronx Community College (1957), Queensborough Community College (1958), and the Graduate School and University Center (1961), also known as the Graduate Center. In 1961 all these institutions were incorporated into the City University of New York. Other institutions to join the CUNY system since 1961 are Borough of Manhattan Community College (1963), Kingsborough Community College (1963), John Jay College of Criminal Justice (1964), Richmond College, now part of the College of Staten Island (1965), York College (1966), Baruch College (1968), Lehman College (1968), Medgar Evers College (1968), LaGuardia Community College (1968); Hostos Community College (1970); the CUNY Baccalaureate (1971); the Macaulay Honors College (2001); the CUNY School of Professional Studies (2003); and the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism (2006).

CUNY alumni excel in every field of human endeavor. CUNY can claim eleven Nobel Laureates among its graduates. It supplies American business with more chief executive officers than any other baccalaureate-granting institution and is one of the nation's top producers of minority Ph.D.'s, engineers, and physicians.

Graduate work leading to the master's degree was established in 1856 at City College and is now offered at all CUNY senior colleges. Graduate work leading to the Ph.D. was established in 1961 at the Graduate Center and builds on a tradition of more than a century and a half of excellence in education. Programs are now offered in most areas of the liberal arts and the sciences; in business, criminal justice, engineering, and social welfare; and in the health science doctoral programs of audiology, nursing science, physical therapy, and public health.