



Dickinson College. Off the Record (College Prowler)

Brooke Lewis

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When I was a little girl, looking out the car window at Carlisle, Pennsylvania on a road trip, I remember asking my mom why anyone would ever want to go to a small college like Dickinson. As I got older, I continued to think that people must be crazy to opt for study at a small private school over a big university. For me, it was hard to see why people would want to go somewhere small when they could go somewhere big, and the fact that I'm from a family of hardcore college football fans only worked to strengthen this conviction. Then, the summer before my senior year in high school, I began to research colleges, and all of that changed.

Right away, I noticed a pattern among the smaller schools. Many of them have excellent academic reputations and high alumni success rates. At small schools, students can easily juggle a varsity sport and their academic load while still enjoying a healthy social life, something that was appealing to me. At a small college, I could actually get to know my professors and classmates through discussion-based courses, as opposed to merely being one of hundreds of students sitting through a lecture at a university. I found that I could be more than a number at a small school; I could be a contributing member of the campus community.

I still had a lot of learning to do, however. That summer, I visited almost every small private school in the tri-state area looking for the right one. Again and again, I walked away from these visits impressed, but not enthralled. All of them were respectable institutions, but they were all alike. None of them stood out. They all seemed to be the same. I wanted to find the one that was different, the one that was moving with the times instead of sitting still. Then, I visited Dickinson.

As soon as I got out of the car in Carlisle, I felt excited. This kind of enthusiasm was unlike anything I had experienced on any of my other college visits, and I could tell after being on campus only a short while that this was an institution that embraced the future rather than dwelling in the past. Here was a school that was engaged with the world, an institution that was making a name for itself in the international arena and whose statistics were only improving with time. The college community at Dickinson seemed genuinely concerned with promoting an education in life rather than just academics, something I hadn't seen anywhere else. Suddenly, I knew where I was going to spend the next four years.

Dickinson is everything I thought it would be and more. I know I will be successful after I leave here, and that conviction has given me the confidence to set goals I never thought I could achieve before. If you're looking for a school that will allow you to cruise through your four years without having to learn and grow as a person, Dickinson probably isn't for you. When you come here, expect to be pushed beyond your limits. You see, Dickinson graduates leave with more than a college degree; they leave with the knowledge and passion to accomplish whatever they set out to do in life. I couldn't be happier with the choice I've made to become a Dickinsonian, and, hopefully, after reading this book, you'll be able to see why.

Brooke Lewis, Author Dickinson College

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