

Best Small College Golf Programs

Playing competitive golf in college can be a dream come true for many talented student athletes. When you're ready to start looking at college programs in earnest, it's important to consider the university as a whole — not just a place to play golf. After all, it's going to be home for the next four years, and that means your college should be a place where you feel comfortable and can't wait to return to after a semester break.

For some students, that means choosing a smaller college. Big Division I universities may offer outstanding golf teams, but if you're not comfortable navigating a campus so big it has its own zip code, you're not likely to love your choice. Smaller colleges and universities offer a more personal feel where you can get to know your professors and classmates — without feeling segregated into an "athlete's track." In many ways a smaller campus offers that quintessential college experience, complete with a quad and leafy, self-contained setting.

Best of all, there are several small universities with big-time NCAA golf programs. Here are some of the top programs to consider, all with fewer than 8,000 undergrads and all ranked in the Division I Top 25:

Duke University

With just 6,600 undergraduate students on its campus in Durham, NC, [Duke University](#) is just the right size to make lasting friendships and explore top-tier academic studies. Its location in North Carolina's Research Triangle makes it a good choice for students interested in science and medicine, and its proximity to Chapel Hill makes it easy to participate in concerts and other cultural events. Best of all, the university golf club is just across the street from campus.

Stanford University

[Stanford University](#) is home to just 7,000 undergraduate students in California. Its location near Palo Alto and just 35 miles south of San Francisco lets students here experience the big city — only an hour's ride away via Caltrain — while still enjoying a compact campus with gorgeous palms and Spanish Revival architecture. World-class research here has led to all kinds of technological advances, and it's a great environment for golfers who also excel in their studies.

Wake Forest University

The smallest school in the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC), [Wake Forest University](#) honors its long history as a golf college — freshmen might wake up each morning in Arnold Palmer Hall and practice on the course he designed. With only 4,800 undergrads, Wake Forest prides itself on building a close-knit community while offering a classic liberal arts education in a secluded suburban setting. From physics to philosophy, there's something here for everyone to fall in love with.

For students who would prefer a tight community and small, walkable campus, these programs offer the best of both worlds: You can play competitive golf at an elite level while still living the college experience of your dreams. Each is worth a close look, and maybe one will be the place you'll call home.

We are now accepting applications for Fall. [Apply Now.](#)

We know college is important to you, which is why it is important to us, too. IJGA College Planning & Placement has decades of experience finding the right college for students.

IJGA College Planning & Placement works with all full-time Academy students to create an individualized roadmap to reach their goal of studying and playing their sport at the collegiate level. This is accomplished through college planning, athletic recruiting, SAT/ACT/TOEFL registration, academic support and NCAA compliance education. We work with Heritage Academy to monitor student grades, make scheduling recommendations and send transcripts to colleges, coaches and to the NCAA.