

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is located in, you guessed right(!), Chapel Hill, North Carolina. I dare say it's a lovely place; you're not going to find yourself lost in a concrete jungle, but at the same time you're not forced to ride the neighbor's horse to get to the closest mall. (There are plenty of bus connections around campus. Getting to stores like Target and Harris Teeter should also not be a problem. In addition most public transportation around here is free of charge. It should, however, be mentioned that, in order to be able to buy proper and not too expensive food, one relies on either taking the bus, which can be troublesome when headed back home, or knowing someone with a car. So, yes, getting groceries is not as easy as it usually is back in Norway where a Rema 1000 or KIWI always hides around the next corner. But enough about food and transport!)

UNC Chapel Hill I believe has approximately eighteen thousand undergraduate students. In addition the university's got a graduate enrollment of approximately eleven thousand students. (Data attained from collegeboard.com, a site that's often come in handy!) While this actually makes UNC CH a rather big school, the atmosphere is definitely not one where you feel like you have to search hard to find a familiar face. This leads me to one of the greatest parts about attending this university; I don't know if it's because one is in the south ("southern hospitality") or because UNC CH is a top five public university in the U.S. (usnews.com), making its student body a rather diverse, out-going, and friendly one, but being met with a smile and a "Hi, how are you?" is something you will have to get used to if you decide to come here. In general the not too big campus (and the beautiful campus it is), the many happy faces, and the sense that (it's cliché, I know) one is actually part of a bigger (family) picture, makes Chapel Hill a true, good-spirited college town.

Whenever you're not engaged in your homework (and I dare say, no matter what field of study you choose to pursue, there will be homework!) there is almost an overwhelming variety of activities one can join. The university has about six-hundred-and-fifty student run clubs or groups, making deciding where to even start an occasionally hard task. Sports are huge at UNC CH (especially basketball and football I've come to realize. With alumni like Michael Jordan, who would expect otherwise?). There are intramural sports (not dead-serious, but competitive sports managed by one self and one's friends), club sports (slightly more competitive. These clubs will normally have try-outs at the beginning of each academic year), and of course varsity sports (very competitive. You need to exceed an average athlete by far to get on the team you want to be part of. But then again, nothing's impossible. If you're interested in trying out, getting in contact with the coach responsible for your area of interest, I'm sure, is of course encouraged!). An interest for sports also leads me to "school spirit" and weekly games. Every now and then Kenan Stadium (on campus) gets filled with about sixty thousand audience members, the vast majority cheering for the Carolina Tar Heels' football team (UNC CH students call themselves Tar Heels). Participating in an event like that, standing side by side with many thousand fellow students, I promise, is an exhilarating experience! (After a four-

hour game, however, eventually you only get really tired.) (There are of course other sport events and games as well. Lacrosse, soccer, field hockey, volleyball, etc.) My point here is simply, though, that there is a lot to get involved with here on campus, if that's what you crave; and if you want to start your own club or organization, no one's going to stop you!

Now, as I mentioned earlier, there will be homework, more than enough. Classes can be challenging. (Again, this of course all depends on the person in question, but most students at least a couple of times during the semester find themselves whining about the neat load of exams and papers coming up.) The quality of the professors will also vary, although I think you will have to dig deep into the world of teachers here at UNC CH to find someone who is not passionate about his or her job or does not know everything there is to know about his or her area of expertise. You might of course have bad luck, but I think you'll find some rotten apples (is that even a real expression?) at whichever university you decide to attend. I do not know the average GPA around here, but if you're ambitious enough, the Honors Society requires a minimum GPA of 3.5 before one is, I'm sure, encouraged to apply.

Being a top public (and top university in general, I believe, ranked 29 among all American universities according to usnews.com) university, entrance to UNC Chapel Hill is competitive. Because the school has an 87%-of-the-students-at-UNC-CH-have-to-be-from-in-state policy, all other students, out-of-state and internationals, fight for a spot among the remaining 13% of available space. 50% of the student body, upon entrance last year, got SAT I scores within the following ranges: SAT Critical Reading, 590-700. SAT Math, 620-710. SAT Writing 580 – 680. 25% had lower scores, and the last 25% had higher scores than the ones given above. (Information taken from collegeboard.com.) (I should also mention that the amount of international students here at UNC CH is negligible compared to the American crowd. Therefore, finding fellow Norwegian students, if that's what you want, can be hard. There are some, though, I know! I've met at least two! My guess is that there are between fifty and a hundred of us here. The total international student body only comprises 1% of the total student body.)

UNC CH's tuition is not the most expensive one you will find in the U.S. but one will still need to account for an annual use of approximately, and this includes tuition, room and board, books, other fees, and some personal expenses, \$40,000. Tuition is about \$23,000 (and is estimated to increase with about 3%-5% each year). Dorm housing normally costs about \$5,000 per academic year. If you want a shared apartment they will be about \$6,000 per academic year. One can also apply for a single room in dorm residences, which will be slightly more expensive than if one teams up with a roommate.

When it comes to residency they will put most new-comers on south campus, in bigger buildings like Morrison (which I've heard is a very nice place!) and Hinton James (which I've heard is not the most up-to-date living complex. If you're into partying, however, I believe this could be the place of your desire. Rumors have it it's a freshman party-dorm). Walking from south campus to north campus really

doesn't take more than fifteen minutes, so one can't really complain. In addition, buses run every fifteen to twenty minutes, making getting around campus rather easy. My tip when it comes to housing: you will find pretty much any dorm nice enough. If you end up in a dorm, life will be slightly more social than if you live in an apartment. If you live in apartment you might get some more time for yourself and of course the luxury of privacy. Recommendations: Most residencies on north campus are nicely located; therefore they would be practical when it comes to accessibility to classes and where everything in general happens. If one can't get into north campus housing, Morrison, Hardin, Horton, Parker, and Craige North, are some halls I've heard and experienced are nice and have a good atmosphere. If apartments seem more desirable, Ram Village (1,2,3,4, and 5. They're commodious, have their own kitchen and bathroom, but people tend to stay inside their apartments, not allowing too much social interaction between fellow building residents) and Odum Village (which I'm afraid I know very little about) are your main options.

There is so much more to say about this place, but, in case you should decide to come here, I won't spoil all the surprises. Some things one has to find out for oneself, right? All I can say is I'm so glad I came to the United States and Chapel Hill. The experience so far has been, yes, occasionally hell due to academics, but most of all exactly what I was looking for: an exhilarating adventure i ukjent farvann!