

2025

MasterScholar

Princeton Social Science Academy

at The Lawrenceville School



MASTER
SCHOLAR

July 27th - August 9th, 2025



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Program Overview

The Princeton Social Science Academy at The Lawrenceville School (PSSA), a two-week summer academic program co-organized by KSE Global Education and faculty from Princeton University, presents a valuable opportunity for high school students to delve deeper into the study of

the social sciences. Hosted on the historic campus of the Lawrenceville School, the PSSA brings together talented, academically inclined students from around the world to explore subjects ranging from sociology to anthropology, economics, political science, and more.

The PSSA curriculum has been meticulously designed by Dr. Shamus Rahman Khan, Professor of American Studies at Princeton University, who also leads the instruction of the program alongside other Princeton faculty. Over the course of two weeks, students engage closely with professors in a variety of formats including lectures, group discussions, practical fieldwork, and the production of social science research papers—all aimed at broadening students' academic horizons while fostering critical thinking, research skills, and a global perspective. Students also participate in engaging extracurricular activities, helping them build lasting connections and develop a global network of talented, intellectually curious peers.

Studying the social sciences is crucial for high school students, helping them better understand current events and complex societal challenges, fostering civic awareness, and enhancing a variety of important social skills including social inquiry, communication, and teamwork. The Academy also promotes personal growth, enabling students to gain a more comprehensive understanding of themselves and clarify their academic and career goals.

* The MasterScholar Princeton Social Science Academy at the Lawrenceville School is led by Princeton University faculty, but is not affiliated with Princeton University.



Program Highlights

Instruction by Princeton University Faculty

The PSSA is designed and taught personally by Princeton University faculty, each possessing an outstanding academic background and extensive teaching experience. This not only presents an opportunity for students to work closely with Ivy League faculty, but also provides unparalleled insights into the study of social sciences—helping students broaden their academic horizons and get a sense of what it's like to pursue these areas of study in a rigorous college environment.

Opportunity for Recommendation Letters

Students who excel in the PSSA program are given the unique opportunity to obtain a college recommendation letter from Professor Shamus Khan. Representing significant recognition of a student's academic capabilities, this recommendation letter can serve as a critical asset in the college application process.

Hosted at a Prestigious American Preparatory School

The PSSA takes place at the Lawrenceville School in Central New Jersey, minutes from the Princeton University campus. Founded in 1810, Lawrenceville is one of the oldest and most prestigious preparatory schools in the United States. PSSA students benefit from Lawrenceville's Harkness learning tradition and state-of-the-art campus, including a modern library and a variety of well-equipped athletic facilities.

Global Cultural Exchange

In gathering outstanding students from around the world to study the social sciences, the PSSA creates a unique environment for global cultural exchange. Students engage with peers from a variety of cultural backgrounds, learning about each other's societies and examining the same social phenomena from diverse perspectives. This process enhances students' cross-cultural communication skills, broadens their intellectual perspectives, and cultivates a global and inclusive mindset.





Core Faculty



Program Director: Shamus Rahman Khan, PhD

The MasterScholar Princeton Social Science Academy is led by Professor Shamus Rahman Khan. With over 17 years of university teaching experience and extensive academic achievements, Professor Khan personally designed the PSSA curriculum to ensure its academic depth, quality, and rigor.



Background:

- Shamus Khan is the Willard Thorp Professor of Sociology and American Studies at Princeton University, as well as the Acting Director of Gender & Sexuality Studies. He specializes in the study of culture, inequality, gender, and elites.
- Khan is the author of over 100 articles, books, and essays, including *Privilege: The Making of an Adolescent Elite at St. Paul's School* (Princeton), *The Practice of Research* (Oxford, with Dana Fisher), and *Approaches to Ethnography: Modes of Representation and Analysis in Participant Observation* (Oxford, with Colin Jerolmack).
- Khan directed the working group on the political influence of economic elites at the Russell Sage Foundation, is the series editor of "The Middle Range" at Columbia University Press, and served as the editor of the journal *Public Culture*.



Education:

- Bachelor's Degree, Haverford College (2000)
- PhD, University of Wisconsin-Madison (2008)



Accolades:

- Awarded Columbia University's highest teaching honor, the Presidential Teaching Award (2016)
- Awarded the Hans L. Zetterberg Prize from Uppsala University for "the best sociologist under 40" (2018)



Core Faculty



Associate Director: Max Besbris, PhD

Professor Max Besbris supports Professor Khan as the PSSA's Associate Director with a focus on research methodology instruction, bringing a wealth of sociological research and teaching experience to the program.



Background:

- Max Besbris is Associate Chair and Associate Professor of Sociology at University of Wisconsin-Madison, specializing in urban sociology, demography and ecology, economic sociology, general social theory, and social stratification.
- Some of Professor Besbris's selected publications include *Upsold: Real Estate Agents, Prices, and Neighborhood Inequality* (University of Chicago Press), *Soaking the Middle Class: Suburban Inequality and Recovery from Disaster* (Russell Sage, with Anna Rhodes), and "Less Theory, More Description" (*Sociological Theory*, with Shamus Khan).



Education:

- PhD, New York University (2017)



Teaching Faculty

All members of the PSSA Teaching Faculty are tenure-line faculty at Princeton University.



John N. Robinson III
Princeton University
Assistant Professor of Sociology
Associate Faculty in African American Studies



Carolyn Choi
Princeton University
Assistant Professor of American Studies



Jerry Zee
Princeton University
Assistant Professor of Anthropology
Associate Faculty, High Meadows Environmental Institute



Benjamin Bradlow
Princeton University
Assistant Professor of Sociology
and International Affairs
Associate Faculty, High Meadows Environmental Institute



Christopher Blair
Princeton University
Assistant Professor of Politics



Hanna Garth
Princeton University
Assistant Professor of Anthropology



Brandon Stewart
Princeton University
Associate Professor of Sociology
Affiliated Faculty, Department of Politics and Office of Population Research



Swati Bhatt
Princeton University
Lecturer in Economics



Thomas Fujiwara
Princeton University
Associate Professor of Economics and International Affairs

Program Details



Program Dates: July 27th – Aug 9th, 2025

Program Schedule:

- Check-In: July 27th
- Orientation & First Day of Classes: July 28th
- Closing Event & Last Day of Classes: August 8th
- Check-Out: August 9th

Program Location:

The Lawrenceville School – Lawrenceville, New Jersey

Course Content:

- Professor-Led Social Science Lectures
- Guest Speaker Lectures
- Research Methodology Courses
- Counselor-Led Seminars

Extracurricular Activities:

1. Princeton University Campus Tour
2. Scavenger Hunt
3. Frisbee
4. Other Sports

* Students will have the opportunity to engage in other outdoor activities and sports, with additional details to be provided closer to the program start date.



Course Content

Lectures by Princeton Professors

Each morning, program faculty deliver lectures covering sociology, economics, political science, anthropology, or other areas of the social sciences. The professors rotate topics daily, using an interdisciplinary approach to enrich the course content.

Guest Speaker Lectures

The program features guest speakers from the business world and academia. These experts share their insights and experiences, discussing research theories, academic trends, and analyses of social phenomena and current events. The lectures are designed to be engaging, interactive, and informative for students.

Research Methodology Courses

These courses teach essential academic research methods, including interdisciplinary, comparative, case study, and historical research methods. The courses aim to help students apply theoretical knowledge to real-world social issues, while at the same time guiding them in the production of their research papers.

Counselor-Led Seminars

Led by a dedicated team of program counselors, the seminars bring together small groups of students organized by their interests to facilitate targeted discussions. This encourages active participation and collaboration among students, and gives them a space to ask questions about course content or receive guidance on their research projects.



Program Outcomes

Professor Evaluation Letter

All students receive an evaluation letter from program faculty, including grades based on their class performance and the completion of their research paper.

Certificate of Completion

Students who successfully complete the program and submit a research paper will receive an official certificate of completion, verifying their participation and achievements.

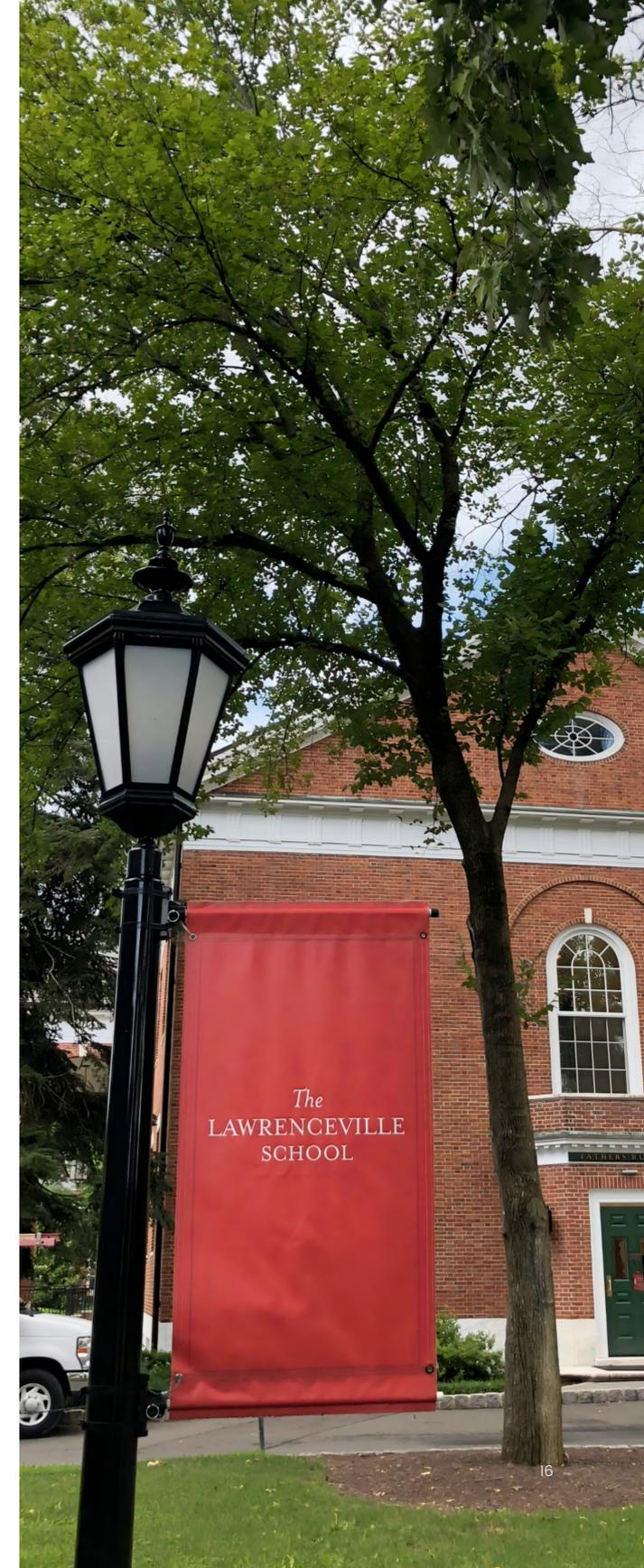
Social Science Research Papers

Before the conclusion of the program, each student produces social science research papers with guidance from program faculty and counselors—a valuable addition to future college applications, and excellent preparation for undergraduate studies.

College Recommendation Letters

Approximately 15% of program participants, representing the most outstanding students, will have the opportunity to receive a college recommendation letter from Professor Shamus Khan. In order to receive these recommendations, students must maintain excellent performance throughout the program and communicate their recommendation requests in a polite and professional manner.

* Please note that recommendations from professors are personal actions, and the MasterScholar program does not take responsibility for the outcomes of these letters.





The Lawrenceville School

The PSSA is hosted on the campus of the Lawrenceville School, a renowned private boarding school located in Lawrenceville, New Jersey. With over 200 years of history, Lawrenceville is one of the oldest preparatory schools in the United States. The campus spans 700 acres (approximately 2.8 square kilometers), offering a wide array of facilities and educational resources that provide students with hands-on learning opportunities and community spaces. Lawrenceville's pedagogy is built around the Harkness method, a collaborative approach to learning that focuses on student-led, small-group discussions. Lawrenceville students achieve impressive post-secondary outcomes, with 18% of students admitted to Ivy League universities.



School Highlights

- **Academic Excellence:**

- Ranked 7th: Best Boarding Schools in America (Niche.com, 2024)
- Ranked 1st: Best Boarding Schools in New Jersey (Niche.com, 2024)
- Ranked 2nd: Best Private High Schools in New Jersey (Niche.com, 2024)

- **Distinguished Alumni:**

- Lawrenceville has produced many notable alumni across various fields, including politics, business, entertainment, and technology.
- George P. Shultz – Former U.S. Secretary of State, Treasury Secretary, and Labor Secretary
 - Michael Eisner – Former CEO of The Walt Disney Company

- Charles "Chas" Freeman – U.S. Diplomat
- J.D. Salinger – Author of The Catcher in the Rye

- **Rich Extracurricular Resources:**

- Lawrenceville offers over 50 student clubs, covering a wide range of areas from academics to arts, sports, and community service.
- The campus features excellent facilities, including a well-equipped modern library, art galleries, a cafe, and even a working campus farm. Lawrenceville also has 18 athletic facilities, including a nine-hole golf course, 12 outdoor tennis courts, an indoor track, a hockey rink, and a ropes course.



Meals & Accommodation

Housing

PSSA students are housed in the student dormitories of The Lawrenceville School. The dormitories are equipped with excellent facilities and services, including 24-hour security, recreational areas, study rooms, communal kitchens, and laundry facilities, ensuring a safe and comfortable living experience. Rooms come with comfortable mattresses, desks, wardrobes, chairs, and air conditioning, while students are required to bring their own bedding. Free Wi-Fi is available, and each room includes a private bathroom and shower.

Meals

All meals (including breakfast, lunch, and dinner) are provided by The Lawrenceville School's cafeteria. The cafeteria strictly adheres to food safety standards, and each meal is carefully designed to meet the needs of every student's diet.



Application Requirements & Deadlines

To learn more about admission requirements and submit an application, please visit master-scholar.com.

Eligibility Requirements:

- High school students and graduates, aged 15–19, are eligible to apply.
- Participants must be at least 15 years old at the start of the program.

Application Requirements:

- **Application Form**
 - Applicants must complete the program application form, upload supporting documents, and pay the application fee prior to their chosen application deadline.
- **Academic Records**
 - High school transcript containing all available grades starting from 9th grade (or the equivalent of the U.S. 9th grade) to the present.
 - Transcripts must be in English or come with a translation. International students not graded according to the U.S. grading

system should provide a grading key with the transcript.

- **Personal Statement**

- Submit a 350–500 word essay responding to the following prompt: Identify a social issue, or a topic from world current events, that is of particular significance to you. Please elaborate on why this subject interests you, and the importance of studying it from a social science perspective.

English Proficiency Requirement

- International students (those who are not citizens or Permanent Residents of the United States) must provide proof of English language proficiency. Please visit the MasterScholar website (master-scholar.com) to learn more about the English Proficiency Requirement.

Key Dates & Deadlines

Applications for the 2025 Princeton Social Science Academy will open on November 15, 2024.

	Application Deadline	Decisions Released	Deposit Payment Deadline
Early Action	2/20/2025	3/1/2025	3/8/2025
Regular Decision	4/30/2025	5/15/2025	5/22/2025

Program Fees



Application Fee: \$20

Deposit Fee: \$750

- The deposit is equal to 10% of the total program fee, and is non-refundable. It is applied to the total program payment amount.

Program Fees:

- \$7,500

Fees cover :

- Tuition, course materials, use of teaching facilities, meals, accommodation, staffing fees, and safety management fees.

Fees do NOT cover :

- Round-trip transportation to and from the program location, all visa-related costs, fees for participating in certain activities, optional airport pick-up/drop-off services, and required international student travel health insurance.



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Academic Journey**

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