About WPI

Founded in 1865, WPI is a pioneer in technological higher education. Its early curriculum was based on balancing theoretical instruction with practical application. In 1970, that model was transformed into a new approach to education that emphasizes outcomes and learning by doing, an innovative curriculum that prepares people for success in life and work in our technological world. More than any other university, WPI offers its undergraduates the opportunity to apply their knowledge to address societal needs, gaining valuable real-world benefits.

WPI students gain a depth of understanding of the humanities and arts, they demonstrate their ability to apply what they learn in the classroom to real-world problems, and they develop an appreciation for how the solutions to those problems might impact the world around them. This groundbreaking approach to education has become a model for change in technological education at the national level.

WPI is a pioneer in globalizing technological education. The university established its first off-campus project center in 1974 in Washington, D.C., and its first international center in 1987 in London. Today, it maintains a network of project centers that span the globe. About 60% of WPI undergraduates now travel off campus to complete professional level projects with international corporations and organizations, gaining an invaluable global perspective.

WPI awarded its first advanced degree in 1898. Today most of WPI’s academic departments offer advanced degree programs that can be pursued on a full or part-time basis. Graduate courses and continuing education programs are offered at WPI and via distance learning options. The growth of the graduate program has helped the university build research efforts that have earned widespread recognition in the scientific and engineering communities. With the external support these efforts have attracted, WPI has created a host of advanced research laboratories, centers and institutes.

WPI’s well-maintained physical plant is an important contributor to the success of its programs. Of its 33 major campus buildings, 19 have been built or acquired since 1962 and a number of historic buildings have been fully renovated in recent decades. WPI’s state-of-the-art campus-wide data network connects every laboratory, classroom, office, residence hall room, and fraternity and sorority at WPI, linking members of the campus community to a host of advanced information technology resources on campus, to each other and, through the Internet, to computer users around the world. With a password, wireless access is offered in the university’s campus center, library and in several public spaces.

WPI’s attractively landscaped 80-acre campus, bordered by public parks and scenic residential areas, is only a few minutes’ walk from downtown Worcester. Situated in the heart of New England, WPI is in a city known as a leading center for biotechnology and bioengineering, and is adjacent to one of the largest concentrations of high-technology industries in the nation.