Graduate and Advanced Graduate Certificates

Keeping pace with technological advancement today is a never-ending task. WPI’s innovative graduate certificate programs help technical and business professionals keep up to date with advances in technologies and business practices without a commitment to a graduate degree program. WPI offers two graduate certificate programs: the Graduate Certificate Program (GCP) and the Advanced Certificate Program (ACP).

Graduate Certificate Program

The Graduate Certificate Program (GCP) provides opportunities for students holding undergraduate degrees to continue their study in an advanced area. A bachelor’s degree is the general prerequisite; however, some departments look for related background when making admission decisions. GCP students are required to complete four to six courses totaling 12 to 18 credit hours in their area of interest. GCP courses can be applied to a WPI graduate degree if the student is subsequently admitted to a degree program in the same discipline.

Graduate certificates are offered in the following departments:
- Biomedical Engineering
- Civil and Environmental Engineering
- Computer Science
- Electrical and Computer Engineering
- Fire Protection Engineering
- Management
- Manufacturing Engineering
- Materials Science and Engineering
- Mathematical Sciences
- Social Science and Policy Studies

Additional programs may be developed in consultation with an academic adviser. For the most current listings go to http://grad.wpi.edu/+certificate.

Advanced Certificate Program

The Advanced Certificate Program (ACP) provides master’s degree holders with an opportunity to continue their studies in advanced topics in the discipline in which they hold their graduate degrees or that is closely related to their graduate fields. The ACP includes four to six courses totaling 12 to 18 credits, none of which were included in the student’s prior master’s program or in any other certificate program.

Each participating department identifies one or more guideline programs; however, each student’s program of study may be customized with the academic advisor’s approval to satisfy the student’s unique interests.

ACP’s are available in the following departments:
- Civil and Environmental Engineering
- Computer Science
- Electrical and Computer Engineering
- Fire Protection Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering

Additional specializations may be developed in consultation with an academic advisor.

Application Process

Application to the GCP and ACP requires submission of an official application form, official transcripts of all college-level work, and a $70 application fee (waived for WPI alumni) to the Office of Graduate Admissions. Individual departments may require additional information. International students may apply to certificate programs. However, for WPI to issue the I-20 form for a student visa, international students must be registered for a minimum of nine credits during their first semester and must complete their program within one year. Applications are available on line at http://grad.wpi.edu/+certificate.

Admission and Matriculation

Admission to a certificate program is granted by the faculty of the sponsoring department through the Graduate Admissions Office. A student accepted into a master's or doctoral program cannot retroactively apply to a certificate program. Only two courses taken prior to application to a certificate program may be counted toward a certificate program. If a student goes beyond the second course as a non-degree student, then those courses cannot be applied to a graduate certificate. However, the credits may be applied to a WPI graduate degree program. A GCP or ACP Certificate will not be awarded without acceptance into a program.

Registration Procedures

GCP and ACP students register at the same time as other WPI graduate students, follow the same registration procedures, and participate in the same classes.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition and fees for GCP and ACP students are the same as for all other WPI graduate students.

Program Planning

Following admission, certificate students will be assigned an academic advisor. Within the first three months of admission, certificate students are required to obtain approval for their Plan of Study from their faculty advisor. The Plan of Study form is available online (grad.wpi.edu/+certificate). The student, the academic advisor and the department will maintain copies of the Plan of Study. Students may initiate written requests to the advisor to modify the program. The student, the academic advisor and the department must retain copies of any approved program modification(s).
Academic Policies
Academic policies regarding acceptable grade point averages for certificate students follow the same guidelines as those established for degree-seeking graduate students with the following exception: If a GCP or ACP student’s grade point average falls below 2.5 after completing nine credits, he/she will be withdrawn from the program unless the academic department intervenes.

Program Completion
Satisfactory completion of a GCP or ACP requires a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or better (A = 4.0) with individual course grades of C or better. Upon satisfactory completion of the program, students will receive a certificate of Graduate Study or a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study in the chosen discipline. Students are responsible for submitting the signed, completed Plan of Study to the Registrar’s Office to receive the certificate.

U.S. citizens will have four years from the date of matriculation to complete their program. International students must complete their program within one academic year.

Transferring from a Certificate Program to a Graduate Degree Program
Admission to a certificate program is not equivalent to admission to a degree program. However, many certificate students eventually choose to pursue a WPI degree program. Students enrolled in a certificate program who would like to pursue a master’s or doctorate must meet the application and admission requirements for the specific degree program as described in the Graduate Catalog. All GCP and ACP course credits will apply to a WPI graduate degree provided that the student is admitted to a graduate degree program and the courses are acceptable to that degree program.

Earning a Second Certificate
A student admitted into a certificate program who wishes to work toward a second certificate program must apply to that second certificate program for admission. The application fee will be waived for the second application. Courses counted toward one certificate may not count toward any other certificate.