About the University and the Community

Graduate Study at WPI

WPI, the nation’s third oldest independent technological university, was also among the first to recognize the need to provide science, engineering, and management professionals with graduate-level educational opportunities on a part- and full-time basis.

Opportunities for graduate study at the university include master’s and doctoral degree programs, graduate certificates, and advanced study for non-degree students. Off-campus study, available in several academic areas through WPI’s Advanced Distance Learning Network, brings graduate education to the workplace or home.

At WPI, part-time graduate students benefit from the same faculty and academic quality as full-time students. In addition, all graduate students have access to the same state-of-the-art facilities and modern laboratories, including the new 125,000-square-foot Life Sciences and Bioengineering Center. This facility, home to graduate research programs from four academic departments, is the first building to be built at Gateway Park, an 11-acre life sciences-based campus the university is developing a short distance from campus.

WPI addresses the requirements of full-time students, technically-oriented professionals, and secondary school educators with a wide range of advanced courses and programs known for their flexibility, quality, and optimal accessibility.

The University

Since its founding in 1865, WPI has emphasized the application of theoretical knowledge to practical, real-world problems, an approach to education reflected in the university’s motto: Lehr und Kunst, or Theory and Practice. The university awarded its first master of science degree (in electrical engineering) in 1893. Its first doctoral degree (in natural science) was granted in 1904. New programs have been added regularly in response to the growing capabilities of the university and the changing needs of the professions. Currently, WPI offers nearly 50 master’s and doctoral programs.

More than 40 years ago, responding to the demanding work schedules of professionals, WPI developed the first of what is today an extensive array of part-time graduate programs. Each is designed to accommodate the professional development needs of those with significant career and family commitments.

The current student body of 3,700 includes more than 1,000 graduate students. They are taught by approximately 320 faculty.

Colleges of Worcester Consortium

Through the Colleges of Worcester Consortium, the area’s 20,000 students have access to all the educational benefits of 13 public and private accredited colleges and universities in central Massachusetts, including eight four-year colleges with graduate programs, a medical school, and a veterinary school, as well as several other specialized institutions in the area. Consortium members and associates whose facilities and programs have been particularly useful to WPI graduate students include Assumption College, Clark University, College of the Holy Cross, the Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University, the University of Massachusetts Medical School, and Worcester State College. Cross-registration in courses and the use of special laboratory facilities are encouraged. The consortium operates a free bus service for transporting students between the colleges.

Locations

WPI is set on an 80-acre hilltop campus situated in a residential section of Worcester, Massachusetts, New England’s third largest city. The campus is within a region known for its concentration of high-technology, healthcare, biotechnology, and biomedical engineering research and industry.

Worcester, a city of 170,000, is distinguished by its many colleges and for such cultural landmarks as the Worcester Art Museum, which houses one of the finest collections in the country, and the world-renowned American Antiquarian Society; both are adjacent to WPI. Also nearby are the historic Higgins Armory Museum and the Ecotarium, a museum dedicated to environmental exploration.

Music is well represented by several excellent choruses, a symphony orchestra, and concerts performed by internationally recognized artists in Mechanics Hall, one of the country’s finest concert halls. The city is also home to several professional and amateur theater companies. The 15,500-seat DCU Center hosts a wide variety of entertainment and sports events.

Located in the heart of New England, Worcester is within an easy drive of many historical sites, cultural centers, and recreational facilities. These include Boston’s Freedom Trail, Fenway Park, the beaches of Cape Cod and Maine, the ski slopes of New Hampshire and Vermont, the Berkshires, and several major metropolitan areas featuring world-class museums, concert halls, and professional sports teams.