Graduate Study at WPI

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

Opportunities for graduate study at the University range from formal graduate degree programs, to graduate certificates, to advanced study for nondegree students, to off-campus study through WPI’s Advanced Distance Learning Network, which brings graduate education to the workplace or home. Part-time graduate students at WPI benefit from the same personalized faculty advising as our full-time students.

WPI addresses the requirements of full-time students, technically oriented professionals and secondary school educators with a wide range of advanced courses and programs with flexibility, quality and optimal accessibility. For added convenience, many programs are offered at one or more of our three campuses in central and eastern Massachusetts or through our Advance Distance Learning Network.

History

WPI was founded in 1865 as the Worcester County Free Institute of Industrial Science, primarily through the efforts of John Boynton, a prosperous tinware manufacturer from the nearby town of Templeton, Massachusetts. It was the merger of Boynton’s vision with that of Ichabod Washburn, the community’s leading industrialist, that resulted in what was then a unique educational program, one that combined scientific and technical studies with practical work in a model industrial shop.

WPI 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 master’s degree programs in 30 disciplines and doctoral programs in 23 disciplines.

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 3,800 includes more than 400 full-time and more than 600 part-time and nondegree graduate students. They are taught by about 220 tenure-track and 215 part-time and non-tenure-track faculty members.

Locations

WPI is set on a 80-acre hilltop campus situated in a residential section of Worcester, Massachusetts, a city of 170,000. Located in the heart of New England, Worcester is the third largest city in the six-state region.

Worcester is well known for 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 of which are adjacent to WPI. Also nearby are the historic Higgins Armory Museum and the Eotarium (formerly the New England Science Center). Music is well represented by several excellent choruses, a symphony orchestra and concerts performed by internationally recognized artists in the beautifully restored Mechanics Hall, one of the finest concert halls in the United States. The city is also home to several professional and amateur theater companies. The 15,500-seat Worcester Centrum Centre hosts a wide variety of entertainment and athletic events and meetings.

Central to New England, the city is within an easy drive of many historical sites, cultural centers and recreational facilities. These include Boston’s Freedom Trail, Old Sturbridge Village (a living museum depicting 1830 rural village life), Fenway Park, the beaches of Cape Cod and Maine, the ski slopes of New Hampshire and Vermont, the splendid country charm of the Berkshires, and several major metropolitan areas featuring world-class museums, concert halls and professional sports teams.