Admission Information

Applying to WPI

Applications for WPI’s graduate science and engineering programs may be submitted online at grad.wpi.edu.

Applications for WPI’s graduate management programs should be requested directly from the Management Department at 508-831-5218 or at mgt.wpi.edu.

Requirements for admission include submission of the following:

• Completed Application for Admission to Graduate Study. Applicants are strongly encouraged to complete the online application which is available at grad.wpi.edu/apply.
• Nonrefundable $70 application fee (waived for WPI alumni and current WPI undergraduates).
• Official college transcripts in English from all accredited degree-granting institutions attended.
• Three letters of recommendation (and/or other references) from individuals who can comment on the qualifications relevant to the applicant's admission.
• Statement of purpose is required for all applicants.
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• Proof of English language proficiency must be submitted by all applicants for whom English is not the first language with the exception of applicants who have attended a United States college or university full time for at least one year. In order to prove English language proficiency, applicants must submit an official score report from either the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or IELTS (International English Language Testing Service.) The minimum scores for admission are:
  TOEFL: 213 (computer based test)
  550 (paper-based test)
  79-80 (internet-based test)
  IELTS: 6.5 overall band score with no sub-score lower than 6.0

Note: Higher scores are required for Teaching Assistants.

WPI’s institutional code for the TOEFL is 3969. Scores are valid for two years from the test date. For more information or to register to take the TOEFL go to: www.toefl.org. For more information or to register to take the IELTS, go to: www.ielts.org.

• For GRE (Graduate Record Examination) requirements, see the chart on page 14. WPI’s school code for the GRE is 3969. Minimum test scores vary by department.
• On-line applicants may check the status of their applications one week after submission via the web at www.wpi.edu/cgi-bin/Notices/redirect.cgi?where=gradlogin.

The procedure for applying as a part-time degree-seeking student is the same as that for a full-time student.

Incomplete applications are retained in the Graduate Studies & Enrollment Office for one year. All applications and support material become the property of WPI.

Priority Deadlines

Research and teaching assistantships are typically awarded by April 1 for the fall semester. For prospective students requesting such financial assistance, completed applications must be on file no later than January 15 of the academic year preceding admission. Some programs also offer assistantships beginning in January, with an October 15 application deadline. Applicants who do not seek financial assistance may apply at any time prior to the start of the semester.

Admission

Admission to a WPI graduate program is granted by that department, program, or sponsoring group, via the Graduate Studies & Enrollment Office.

Some programs, in admitting a student, determine the degree toward which the student may work. In such a case, an admitted student who wishes to work toward a different degree in the same program should consult the department head of the admitting program as to procedures to be followed and requirements. Typically, such cases involve students who have been admitted to a program leading to a master’s degree and who wish to continue toward a doctorate.

An admitted student who wishes to work toward a second degree offered by a different department or program must apply to that second program for admission. Standard application procedures are followed except that no application fee is required for a second degree.

Under some circumstances a student not yet admitted to a program may earn graduate credit toward the requirements for a graduate degree. The fact that a student has been allowed to register for courses and earn graduate credit from a program does not guarantee that the student, at a later date, will be admitted to that program.

Students are therefore encouraged to apply for admission to a program at the earliest possible date.

Probational Admission

If an applicant’s undergraduate record is below the usual standards for admission, but there are mitigating circumstances, probational admission may be granted. Such admission usually means that the student’s performance will be reviewed at a specified time and a decision will be made about continuation in the graduate program.

Conditional Admission

Under some circumstances (usually where the background of the student is considered to be incomplete by the department or program), conditional admission may be granted. Conditional admission indicates that the student will receive regular admission status only after overcoming the specific deficiencies as outlined in the conditional admission letter. The conditionally admitted student will be instructed as to specific course deficiencies, required minimum grades expected to be attained in these classes, time over which deficiencies are to be completed, etc. Progress of the conditionally admitted student will be monitored by the student’s department. Please consult departmental descriptions for more details.
Confirmation of Admission
The letter of admission from the Graduate Admissions Office indicates the semes-
ter for which admission is granted and requires that the student respond by a
specific date by completing the Graduate Admission Response form and submit a
$100 nonrefundable deposit.

Deferred Enrollment
An admitted student who wishes to defer enrollment must make such a request
in writing to the Graduate Admissions Office, which will seek approval from the
academic department involved and reply to the student.

Transfers and Waivers
A student may petition for permission
to use graduate courses taken at other
institutions to satisfy WPI graduate degree
requirements. A maximum of one-third
of the credit requirements for a graduate
degree may be satisfied by courses taken
elsewhere and not used to satisfy degree
requirements at other institutions. Petitions
are subject to approval by the student’s
academic department or program, and are
then filed with the Registrar. To ensure
that work constitutes current practice in
the field, the program may set a latest date
at which each course may be applied to-
ward the degree. Such courses are recorded
on the student’s WPI transcript with the
grade CR, and are not included in calcula-
tions of grade point averages. However,
grades earned in Biomedical Consortium
courses are recorded on the transcript as if
the courses were taken on campus.

Applicants may file transfer or waiver peti-
tions with their application for admission.
Notice of the approval may be included
in the letter of admission to the student.
This inclusion is known as admission with
advanced standing.

A student with one or more WPI master’s
degrees who is seeking an additional
master’s degree from WPI may petition
to apply up to 9 prior credits toward
satisfying requirements for the subsequent
degree.

A student who withdraws from a gradu-
ate program and is later readmitted may
apply course and other credits taken before
withdrawal toward the degree. The admit-
ting program will determine at the time
of readmission which courses taken by the
student may be applied toward the degree
and the latest date those courses may be
applied. There is no limit, other than that
imposed by the program, on how many
credits a readmitted student may use
from prior admissions to the same degree
program.

With the appropriate background, a
student may ask permission to waive a
required course and substitute a speci-
fied, more advanced course in the same
discipline. Requests are subject to approval
by the student’s program and must be filed
with the Registrar within one year of the
date of matriculation in the program. A
program may waive (with specified substi-
tutions) up to three required courses for a
single student.

Acceptability of Credit
Applicable to an
Advanced Degree
Graduate level credit, obtained from
courses, thesis and project work, may
include:
• Coursework included in the approved
  Plan of Study.
• Coursework completed at the graduate
  level and successfully transferred to WPI
  from other institutions (see Transfers
  and Waivers).
• Graduate coursework completed at the
  undergraduate level at WPI and not ap-
  plied toward another degree.
• Up to 9 credit hours from a previous
  WPI master’s degree may be used in
  partial fulfillment of the requirements
  for a second master’s degree at WPI.
• Coursework approved for the Com-
  bined WPI Bachelor’s/Master’s Program.
• Project work done at the graduate level
  at WPI.
• Thesis work done at the graduate level
  at WPI.

Departments/programs may limit the
use of credit in any of these areas depend-
ing upon their specific departmental
requirements.

Admission to Interdisciplinary
Doctoral Programs
WPI encourages interdisciplinary research. Students may apply for admission to inter-
disciplinary studies directly, but students
interested in such options should do so
with the assistance of WPI faculty, as these
programs require internal sponsorship (see
Interdisciplinary Doctoral Programs, pages
5 and 71).

Advanced Study for
Nondegree Students
Individuals with earned bachelors degrees
may wish to enroll in a single course or a
limited number of courses prior to apply-
ing for admission. When registering for
courses as a nondegree student, grading
may be either conventional (A,B,C) or
Pass/Fail. Pass/Fail grading must be elected
at the time of registration, and courses
taken on the Pass/ Fail basis are not trans-
ferable to any master’s degree program.

Non-admitted students may take a
maximum of four graduate courses and
receive letter grades in most departments.
See department descriptions for specific
information. Once these maximums are
reached, additional course registrations
will be changed to pass/fail and may not
be used for degree credit.

The fact that a student has been allowed
to register for graduate courses (and earn
credit) does not guarantee that the student
will be admitted to that department’s cer-
tificate or graduate program at a later date.
Students are therefore encouraged to apply
for admission to a certificate program prior
to any course registration.