

# Enrollment and Registration

The basic requirement for enrollment in a given course is a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution in a relevant field of science or engineering. Although those with management backgrounds may enroll in graduate management courses, no prior management study is required. Persons who have been admitted to graduate study at WPI are given first priority in course registration. Persons not holding a bachelor's degree, but who might qualify through training or experience, may be allowed to enroll on either a credit or audit basis with permission of the instructor. Registration for graduate courses is on a space-available basis for nonadmitted students.

Graduate students are expected to enroll in graduate courses or thesis credit on the registration days designated in the WPI academic calendar. Registration on days not designated will result in additional fees.

Enrollment in a course or courses, and satisfactory completion of those courses, does not constitute acceptance as a candidate for any graduate degree nor does it indicate admission to any graduate program. For students seeking advanced degrees, or graduate certificates, formal admission to a graduate program is required.

## International Students

International students are required to enroll no later than the final day of the add/drop period. Students must be enrolled by this time in order to be registered in the SEVIS database and to remain in legal immigration. Failure to enroll in a timely manner could jeopardize a student's legal status and ability to lawfully remain in the U.S. International students must be enrolled in full-time status during the academic year to be in compliance with their visa. It is important that all students at WPI on a visa work with the International House to maintain their visa compliance.

## Degree-Seeking Student Enrollment

Graduate students must be registered for the semester in which degree requirements are completed. For master of science programs requiring a thesis and all Ph.D. programs, students must register for a minimum of 1 semester credit hour. For master of science programs that do not require a thesis, all students must be registered for all remaining credits in the final semester of study.

Full-time degree-seeking graduate students are expected to be continuously registered during their graduate school careers, excluding the summer semester. Full-time degree seeking students who interrupt their studies and are not on an approved leave of absence will be marked 'inactive' in any fall or spring semester in which there is no registration or credit activity. Inactive status means that students do not have access to WPI buildings, services or coursework.

In recognition of the competing responsibilities faced by part-time students, WPI allows one semester without credit activity to elapse before active status is revoked. Part-time degree-seeking graduate students will be marked inactive if one semester elapses with no credit activity and the registration period of the subsequent semester ends without registration or credit activity.

Inactive students will need to complete a readmission form through the Registrar's Office. See "Readmission from Leave of Absence" section below.

## Official Withdrawal

Students who wish to terminate their degree programs must complete the Graduate Withdrawal Form available on the Registrar website and submit it to the Registrar's Office. Any registrations in semesters or terms that have begun before the certified date of last attendance will receive a grade of W and the student will be exempted

from academic review. Any registrations in semesters or terms that have not begun before the certified date of last attendance will be dropped. For official start dates of semesters and terms, see the Academic Calendar. For tuition adjustment information, see the "Tuition and Fees" section.

Students who have attended through the 12th week of a semester (or the 5th week of B or D terms) may not withdraw for that semester and will be academically reviewed. They may withdraw for the following semester.

Note: This applies to students officially withdrawing from the University; for an individual course withdrawal, please refer to the Course Changes section for policy and refund information.

## Institutional Leave of Absence

Full-time students who wish to take a temporary leave from their degree programs and part-time students who wish to take more than one contiguous semester off must complete the Leave of Absence Form available on the Registrar website and submit it to the Registrar's Office. Students should inform themselves about consequences to financial aid, visa status, housing, and other considerations before taking an institutional leave of absence. Any registrations in semesters or terms that have begun before the certified date of last attendance will receive a grade of W and the student will be exempted from academic review. Any registrations in semesters or terms that have not begun before the certified date of last attendance will be dropped. For official start dates of semesters and terms, see the Academic Calendar. For tuition adjustment information, see the "Tuition and Fees" section.

Students who have attended through the 12th week of a semester (or the 5th week of B or D terms) may not take a leave of absence for that semester and will be academically reviewed. They may take a leave of absence for the following semester.

Note: This applies to students taking a full leave from the University; for an individual course withdrawal, please refer to the Course Changes section for policy and refund information.

## Readmission from Leave of Absence

To return, a student must fill out the Graduate Readmission Form available on the Registrar website and submit it to the Registrar's Office with all required signatures at least 30 days prior to the start of the semester in which they plan to return.

## Military Leave of Absence

WPI graduate students who are called to active duty by the United States military shall receive a 100% refund for the uncompleted semester at the date of the notice. If such students have a loan obligation to WPI they will be granted an in-school deferment status during the period of active duty service, not to exceed a total of three years. To initiate the process to be classified "on leave for military service," a student must fill out a Leave of Absence form available on the Registrar website indicating that he/she is requesting school deferment status while being called to active duty. A copy of the official call to active duty notice from the military must be included with this request and be submitted to the Registrar's Office.

If the student has paid a tuition bill with proceeds from either a subsidized or an unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loan and has received a refund for either or both of the loans, the student shall be responsible for any overpayment of funds. It is therefore necessary for the student to contact the lender(s) upon withdrawal.

## Childbirth and Adoption Accommodation Policy

In recognition of the challenges of balancing the demands of graduate study and parenting a new child, the Childbirth/Adoption Accommodation Policy aims to improve the environment for student parents. An

Accommodation can be taken based on the student's individual circumstance in consultation with their Advisor and the Dean of Graduate Studies; early consultation will provide the time necessary to rearrange teaching duties for those students supported by teaching assistantships, or to adjust research/lab schedules. The purpose of this policy is to make it possible for a student to maintain registered full time student status, along with all the benefits of such status, while facilitating the return to full participation in courses, research and teaching.

Special note for TAs/RAs/Fellowship Students: During the Childbirth/Adoption Accommodation period, expectant graduate students who have been funded for the previous twelve (12) months through WPI internal TA/RA/Fellowships and who have received an award letter indicating continuing support will be eligible for salary continuation. During this timeframe, duties typically performed by TAs and RAs will be suspended for (eight weeks) and the student will not be expected to work. If the student parent is a teaching assistant, the Office of Graduate Studies will fund a temporary replacement for the affected period if necessary.

Requesting Leave: Matriculated and enrolled graduate students may formally request a Childbirth/Adoption Accommodation by emailing the Office of Graduate Studies. The student will be provided with a Childbirth/Adoption Accommodation Request form and will need to follow the appropriate procedures and documentation required. This Academic Accommodation Period is not a leave of absence from University responsibilities. The expectation is that the woman will be in residence, and assuming good health of the pregnant woman or new mother and the infant, will remain engaged in classwork and research.

## Graduate Internship Experience

Graduate internship experiences are available across several programs of studies at WPI in order to enhance the professional development of Masters and Doctoral students. The graduate internship is a short-term and temporary work assignment in residence at a company or other *external* organization that forms a complementary part of a student's educational program. An internship will appear on the transcript with a minimum of 0 credits and a maximum of 3 credits (as determined by the department/program). All students require the approval of their faculty advisor-of-record to participate in an internship. Furthermore, the student and their faculty advisor-of-record will define concrete performance metrics and objectives to be achieved during the internship prior to the experience.

The graduate internship experience must align with the student's plan of study and be related to the specific graduate degree program. Because the purpose of an internship is to provide a student with a new experience, graduate students already employed full-time or part-time may not participate as interns at the same place of employment without program approval. Since the internship must be performed at an external site, WPI would not be considered an acceptable sponsor for a graduate internship. Typically, Teaching Assistants may not be on internship during the same time period during the academic year as when they are serving as a TA, but may pursue an internship over the summer or with departmental/program permission.

The graduate internship is not a University requirement, but rather an option available to all graduate students enrolled in graduate programs that permit internships. Students may pursue graduate internship experiences of up to 3 credits per degree (as determined by the department/ program). Internship experiences may be completed for 0-3 credits, and multiple internship experiences across semesters may be completed. However, graduate students may be enrolled in internships during a maximum of 3 semesters, inclusive of the summer, regardless of the amount of credit assigned per internship experience. Students must formally register for an internship for each semester they will be participating in an internship experience, even if the internship spans multiple semesters. Students enrolled in full time internships, defined as more than 20 hours per week, will be deemed a full-time student for that semester. Students enrolled in part time internships, less than 20 hours, will still need to be registered for 8 or more credits, inclusive of the internship's credits, to be considered fully enrolled. For-credit internship experiences are only for matriculated students. Graduate internships may not be applied to multiple degrees (i.e., BS/MS). Resources for graduate internships and job search tools are highlighted in the Career Development Center subsection in the Graduate Catalog. Enrollment in the graduate internship experience must adhere to established add/drop deadlines. For more information about graduate internship policies and procedures, including how to register for graduate internships, please see <https://www.wpi.edu/academics/graduate/internships>.

**For Masters Students:** Students enrolled in a Master's program may participate in the graduate internship experience after successfully completing their first 12 credits of graduate coursework at WPI, provided they are in good academic standing. If returning for a new degree after time away from the university, double counting credits from previous WPI degrees will not count towards the 12 credit threshold needed to be eligible to register for a graduate internship. With approval of the program designee, Master's students participating in a graduate internship should register for the graduate internship course designated 5900.

**For PhD Students:** Students enrolled in a PhD program may participate in the graduate internship experience after successfully completing their first 12 credits of graduate coursework at WPI, provided they are in good academic standing. If returning for a new degree after time away from the university, double counting credits from previous WPI degrees will not count towards the 12 credit threshold needed to be eligible to register for a graduate internship. With approval of the program designee, PhD students participating in a graduate internship should register for the graduate internship course designated 6900.

## Special Notes for International Students:

An international graduate student on an F-1 visa must maintain full-time status for the duration of their graduate program. International students with F-1 visa status may apply for two types of practical training:

1. Curricular Practical Training (CPT): CPT is used for graduate level internships while students are pursuing their degrees. CPT is authorized by the university and the requirement is that the internship is an integral part of an established curriculum. Internships should be for credit.
2. Optional Practical Training (OPT): OPT is typically used by students for one year of employment after completion of degree. It can also be used in part for summer jobs or part-time employment during the academic year if employment is in the student's field of study. OPT requires approval by U.S. Customs and Immigration Services.

## Non-degree Student Enrollment

Individuals with earned bachelor's degrees may wish to enroll in a single course or a limited number of courses prior to applying for admission. Non-degree students may choose to be graded conventionally (A, B, C), or on a pass/fail basis. Pass/Fail grading must be chosen at the time of registration, and courses taken on the pass/fail basis are not transferable to any master's degree program.

Non-degree students may take a maximum of 6 credits and receive letter grades in most departments. Once this maximum of 6 credits is reached, additional course registrations will be changed to pass/fail and will 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 certificate or degree program at a later date. Students are therefore encouraged to apply for admission to a degree or certificate program prior to any course registration.

## Non-degree Student Course Registration

Nondegree-seeking students register for courses in the same manner as all other students. However, degree-seeking students have preference in registering for courses with limited enrollments. Non-degree graduate students are considered active only in those semesters during which they have a current registration and credit activity. They are marked as inactive in the semester following the conclusion of their credit activity, including the summer semester, provided there is no new registration.

## Auditing Courses

Graduate students primarily interested in the content of a particular course may register as auditors. Students are charged a 50% reduced tuition rate per semester hour to audit a course. There is no credit and no grade awarded for classes that are audited. Students cannot audit thesis and project work.

Audit registrants are encouraged to participate in the courses, but typically do not submit written work for evaluation. Often professors will accept written work of audit registrants, but this is left to the discretion of the instructor.

A student may change from credit to audit registration, but may not change from audit to regular credit registration. To change to audit registration for any graduate course, the student must complete an audit form (available in the Registrar's Office) within the first three weeks of class. No tuition or fees will be returned to students who change to audit registration, i.e., the full tuition rate applies.

## Definition of Full-Time and Part-Time Status

If a student is registered for 8 or more credits, the student is deemed to be a full-time student for that semester. If a student needs fewer than 8 academic credits to complete degree requirements, registration for the number of credits required for completion of the degree gives the student full-time status. A student pursuing a master's degree, whose Plan of Study shows completion of all degree requirements within a single two-year period, retains full-time status so long as the student complies with that Plan of Study. A student officially enrolled in a graduate internship program has full-time status during the internship period. If a student has completed the minimum number of credits required for a degree, and is certified by the department or program to be working full-time toward the degree, enrollment in 1 credit of dissertation research for a student seeking the doctorate establishes full time status. For students seeking a master's degree, 1 credit of thesis research establishes the student's full-time status with department certification. For the purposes of this rule, the semesters are fall and spring.

## Transcripts

Transcripts may be requested, and there is a fee associated with each transcript. For more information, please visit [www.wpi.edu/+registrar](http://www.wpi.edu/+registrar).

## Course Changes

There is an add/drop period at the start of each term and the exact deadlines depend on whether the course follows a 7-week schedule or a 14-week schedule.

**For 7-week courses** (undergraduate and graduate), a student can add a course without a fee through the fifth day of classes. On the sixth through the tenth day of classes, students can add courses (with instructor approval) with a \$100 late fee. Students can drop courses on days 1-10 of each term without incurring a late fee. For undergraduates in 7-week courses, no adds or drops are allowed after the tenth day of the term. For graduate students in 7-week courses who drop a course after the tenth day, but before the end of the fifth week of the term, a W (Withdrawal) will be assigned. Tuition will be adjusted for individual course withdrawals based on the schedule posted for Leaves of Absence and Official Withdrawal.

**For 14-week courses** (undergraduate and graduate), students can make course changes (add or drop) without penalty through the tenth day of the semester. A \$100 late fee will be charged for course adds after the tenth day of the semester and instructor permission is required. No drops are allowed after the tenth day of the semester; for graduate students, course withdrawals are permitted through the tenth week of the semester, and

a grade of W (Withdrawal) will be assigned. Tuition will be adjusted for individual course withdrawals based on the schedule posted for Leaves of Absence and Official Withdrawal. Consult the University calendar for specific dates.

**For 10-week courses** (undergraduate and graduate), students can make course changes (add or drop) without penalty through the tenth day of the semester. A \$100 late fee will be charged for course adds after the tenth day of the semester and instructor permission is required. No drops are allowed after the tenth day of the semester; for graduate students, course withdrawals are permitted through the seventh week of the semester, and a grade of W (Withdrawal) will be assigned. Tuition will be adjusted for individual course withdrawals based on the schedule posted for Leaves of Absence and Official Withdrawal.

*Note: If a degree-seeking student is dropping or withdrawing from all registered course activity, they must either take an institutional leave of absence or officially withdraw from the University.*

## Directory Information and Release of Information

The items listed below are designated as "Directory Information" for each student: campus mailbox, full name, year, major, advisor, e-mail address, permanent address, local address, local phone, photograph, date and place of birth, dates of attendance, enrollment status, degrees and awards received, and most recent or previous educational agency or institution.

Under the provisions of the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974](#) (FERPA), the institution is permitted to release Directory Information without a student's consent. A student, however, has the right to restrict the disclosure of any or all of their Directory Information. Written notification to withhold Directory Information must be received by the Registrar's Office during the first week of the fall semester/A term. Forms are available in the Registrar's Office or on the Registrar's [website](#). A request to restrict the disclosure of Directory Information does not restrict internal use of such by the institution.