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# Introduction to WestConn

## University History

Western Connecticut State University, founded in 1903, is located in Danbury, a major city in Fairfield County in the foothills of the Berkshire Mountains, 65 miles north of Manhattan and 50 miles west of Hartford. WestConn's rural 364-acre Westside campus complements its 34-acre, 16-building Midtown campus in the heart of downtown Danbury. Constant planning, evaluation, and improvement of programs and curriculum sharpen WestConn's "edge of excellence" and keep it responsive to the progressive community it serves. The university works with and is supported by a forward-looking, innovative non-profit, cultural, service and business community and collaborates with several local, state, and regional community agencies and educational institutions.

## Mission Statement

Western Connecticut State University serves as an accessible, responsive and creative intellectual resource for the people and institutions of Connecticut. We strive to meet the educational needs of a diversified student body through instruction, scholarship and public service. WestConn aspires to be a public university of choice for programs of excellence in the liberal arts and the professions by providing full-time and part-time students with the necessary background to be successful in their chosen careers and to be productive members of society. It accomplishes this by emphasizing:

- A strong liberal arts foundation
- Strong skills in communication, problem-solving, and critical thinking
- Opportunities for experiential, cooperative and internship experiences
- A strong background in information technologies
- Interdisciplinary programs
- A strong sense of commitment to public service
- A personalized learning environment

Our mission as a public comprehensive university is given life through the principles and values which guide us.

## Fulfilling the Mission

### *Principles*

- Empowering students to attain the highest standards of academic achievement, public and professional services, personal development and ethical conduct is our fundamental responsibility.
- Facilitating learning is our primary function, and it requires that our faculty be active scholars who have a lasting interest in enhancing instruction and that our curriculum be dynamic and include advanced instructional technologies.
- Preparing students for enlightened and productive participation in a global society is our obligation, and it is best fulfilled by developing the best possible academic programs and learning experiences.
- Promoting a rich and diverse cultural environment that allows freedom of expression within a spirit of civility and mutual respect is our abiding commitment.
- Strengthening our partnership with the people and institutions of Connecticut is a benefit to both the university and the state, and endows our teaching and scholarship with a special vitality and dedication.

### *Values*

- Quality and integrity in all that we do, and a commitment to continuous improvement.
- Respect for the dignity and rights of each member of our university community.

## University Organization

The university comprises five academic units: the Ansell School of Business, the School of Arts and Sciences, the School of Professional Studies, the School of Visual and Performing Arts and the Division of Graduate Studies and External Programs. All graduate and undergraduate programs are offered through one of the five units. The Division of Graduate Studies and External Programs coordinates all graduate and external degree programs.

## **Educational Records, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

Western Connecticut State University accords all the rights under the law to students. No one outside the university shall have access to, nor will the university disclose any information from, a student's educational records without his/her written consent except to personnel within the university, to officials of other institutions in which the student seeks to enroll, to persons or organizations providing students financial aid, to accreditation groups, to persons in compliance with a judicial order, to persons in an emergency in order to protect the health or safety of students or other persons, or to parents of a student who is officially documented as their dependent for income tax purposes. All these exceptions are permitted under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. The university will maintain a record of all requests for and/or disclosure of information from a student's educational records. The record will indicate the name of the party making the request, any additional party to whom it may be redisclosed, and the legitimate interest the party had in requesting or obtaining the information. The record may be reviewed by the eligible student.

Within the Western Connecticut State University community, only those university officials acting in the student's educational interest are allowed access to education records. A university official is any person employed by the university in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research, or support-staff position; any person appointed to the Board of Trustees for the Connecticut State University; or any person employed by or under contract to the university or the State of Connecticut to perform a special task, such as an attorney or auditor. A university official has a legitimate educational interest if the official is: performing a task that is specified in his/her position description or by contract agreement; performing a task related to a student's education; performing a task relating to the discipline of a student; or providing a service or benefit relating to the student or student's family, such as health care, counseling, job placement or financial aid.

At its discretion, the university may provide directory information in accordance with the provisions of the act to include: student name, address, telephone number, photo ID, date of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, and weight and height of members of athletic teams. Students may withhold directory information by notifying the Office of Student Affairs in writing within two weeks after the first day of class for the current term.

Requests for nondisclosure will be honored by the university for only one semester. Therefore, authorization to withhold directory information must be filed each semester in the Office of Student Affairs.

The law provides students the right to inspect and review information contained in their education records, to challenge the contents of their education records and to have a hearing on the matter. The vice president of student affairs or his designee at Western Connecticut State University has been designated to coordinate the inspection and review procedures for student educational records, which include: admissions, personal, academic, financial, disciplinary, cooperative education and placement records. Students wishing to review their educational records must make requests to the registrar listing the item of interest. Only records covered by the act will be made available within 45 days of the request. Students may have copies made of their records with certain exceptions (e.g. a copy of their academic record for which a financial "hold" exists, or a transcript of an original or source document which exists elsewhere). To obtain a copy of your transcript, contact the Registrar's Office at (203) 837-9200. Educational records do not include: records of instructional, administrative and educational personnel, which are the sole possession of the maker and are not accessible or revealed to any individual except a temporary substitute, records of a law enforcement unit, student health records, employment records or alumni records. Health records, however, may be reviewed by the physician of the student's choosing.

Students may not inspect and/or review the following as outlined by the act: financial information submitted by their parents' confidential letters and recommendations associated with admissions, employment or job placement, honors to which they have waived their rights of inspection and review, or education records containing information about more than one student. In this last case, the university will permit access only to that part of the record which pertains to the inquiring student. The university is not required to permit students to inspect and/or review confidential letters and recommendations placed in their files prior to January

1, 1975, provided these letters were collected under established policies of confidentiality and were used only for the purpose for which they were collected.

Students who believe that their educational records contain information that is inaccurate or misleading or is otherwise in violation of their privacy or other rights may discuss their problems informally with the Office of Student Affairs.

In the event a student's request, either to have access to a record or to amend information in a file has been denied, the student may ask for a formal hearing. The student must submit a written request for the hearing to the vice president for academic affairs. The hearing panel will consist of the vice president for academic affairs, the graduate dean and the academic dean of his/her school. Decisions of the hearing panel are final. Any alteration to the student's record will be in accordance with the decision of the hearing panel and will become a permanent part of that record. The student has a right to add a statement to a challenged record if the panel's decision is not to amend the record in accordance with the student's request.

Students who believe that the adjudications of their challenges were unfair or not in keeping with the provisions of the act may request, in writing, assistance from the president of the university to aid them in filing complaints with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202.

### **Alumni Association**

The Alumni Association of Western Connecticut State University, founded in 1919, promotes the general welfare of the university. The board of directors is comprised of 16 directors and five officers who meet regularly to discuss and plan programs, events and volunteer opportunities for alumni.

Contributing members receive: an alumni membership card; borrowing privileges at both the Ruth A. Haas and Robert Young Libraries; use of computers in the Haas Library; and special membership benefits through the WCSU Save Program which provide alumni with discounts at local and nationwide businesses. All alumni receive the AlumniNews magazine, Alumni E-Newsletter, insurance and credit card discount offers, career services through the Career Development Center, alumni locator service, and invitations to special alumni receptions and events, including Homecoming.

Scholarships are awarded each year by the Alumni Association to deserving WestConn students who meet academic requirements and show evidence of extra-curricular involvement at the university and community level.

The Alumni Association keeps alumni connected to their alma mater through social networking activities, hosted on- and off-campus. As a graduate of Danbury Normal School, Danbury State Teacher's College, Danbury State College, Western Connecticut State College or Western Connecticut State University, alumni are part of campus history and the future of the university.

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## **The Campuses**

### **Midtown Campus**

The Midtown campus, WestConn's original campus, is located in downtown Danbury. The many recent renovations, additions and new buildings have transformed the Midtown campus into a modern college setting while retaining WestConn's traditional character. The Midtown campus features:

- ALUMNI HALL - A 8,434-sq.-ft. building that houses a lecture hall, administrative offices and the WCSU Child Care Center.
- BERKSHIRE HALL, HIGGINS HALL and WHITE HALL - These classroom buildings house many specialized education facilities, such as the Academic Advisement Center, an art gallery, Ives Concert Hall,

Berkshire Theatre, the Bill Williams Gymnasium, the Language Lab and The Learning Centers (math, writing, study skills).

- FAIRFIELD, LITCHFIELD and NEWBURY HALLS - These residence halls provide accessible accommodations for 632 students.
- Fifth Avenue Garage - This new 800-car, student parking garage is located on the corner of Fifth Avenue and Osborne Street.
- OLD MAIN - The original building of the Danbury State Normal School dating back to 1904, Old Main houses the Admissions Office for undergraduate students, the Division of Graduate Studies, and one-stop student services that includes the Financial Aid Office, Registrar's Office, Cashier's Office and the WestConnect Card Office.
- RUTH A. HAAS LIBRARY - The Haas Library has over 200,000 volumes and over 400,000 bound periodicals, microforms, government documents, music scores, electronic resources and audio-visual items.
- SCIENCE BUILDING - Opened in fall 2005, this award-winning building houses the university's biology, chemistry, physics, astronomy and meteorology programs and science laboratories.
- STUDENT CENTER - The student center houses campus dining facilities, the university bookstore, post office, student government offices, campus ministries, meeting rooms, Echo Office (student newspaper), WXCI (the student FM radio station), Student Technology Training Center, Career Development Center, AccessAbility Services and the Counseling Center.
- UNIVERSITY HALL - A four-level office building that houses administrative offices.
- WARNER HALL - This 34,078-sq.-ft. building houses classrooms, meeting rooms, gallery/lounge and administrative and faculty offices.
- WHITE STREET PARKING GARAGE - This is a three-level, 900-car, accessible parking garage with a covered skywalk crossing White Street.

## **The Westside Campus**

The 364-acre Westside campus features:

- ATHLETIC STADIUM - Facilities include a synthetic field surface, locker rooms, coaches' offices, press box and concessions area. The Westside campus also has fully lighted intramural, baseball and softball fields.
- CENTENNIAL HALL & PARKING STRUCTURE - This 417-bed dormitory-style residence hall with parking garage complements the existing apartment-style residence halls at Westside.
- CLASSROOM BUILDING - The Westside Classroom Building houses undergraduate and graduate programs in business and many graduate programs in education. It features the Robert S. Young Library, many microcomputer labs, classrooms and faculty offices.
- ELLA GRASSO HALL - An apartment-style residence hall designed to house 261 students.
- PINNEY HALL - A 426-bed, apartment-style residence hall.
- THE CHARLES IVES CENTER FOR THE ARTS - A 40-acre outdoor amphitheater, the center is used for outdoor performances.
- WESTSIDE CAMPUS CENTER - This 49,000-sq.-ft. student center provides a full service dining facility, game/club room, cardio-fitness center, ballroom, meeting and conference rooms, student activity space, lounge areas and related campus-life and student-life facilities.
- WESTSIDE NATURE PRESERVE (WNP)- A 33-acre nature preserve, the WNP is an outdoor laboratory with maintained trails.
- WESTSIDE OBSERVATORY - Newly expanded and renovated, the observatory is outfitted with a 20" Ritchey Chretien Telescope, the largest of its kind in Connecticut.
- WILLIAM A. O'NEILL ATHLETIC AND CONVOCATION CENTER - The center contains a 4,000-seat arena, indoor tennis, basketball and volleyball courts, weight training facility, a swimming pool and the athletic department offices.

## **WestConn at Waterbury**

Western Connecticut State University at Waterbury is located in Founders Hall on the Naugatuck Valley Community College campus, 750 Chase Parkway, Waterbury. In addition to offering bachelor degree-completion programs in nursing and management, WestConn at Waterbury offers selected general education and graduate classes. For more information on these programs, contact WestConn at the Waterbury Dean's office, Founder's Hall 129, (203) 596-8777.

## **Campus Parking**

WCSU has designated parking areas for students, faculty and staff. Commuter student parking is available in a garage on Fifth Avenue and Osborne Street on the Midtown campus. All other surface lots are restricted for faculty and staff parking on the Midtown campus. The White Street garage is designated for Midtown residents, staff and faculty parking. Detailed parking information and maps of surface lots for both campuses are available on the website at [wcsu.edu/parking](http://wcsu.edu/parking).

Every student, faculty and staff member must display a valid parking permit when parking on university property. Parking permits are available from the University Police Dept. Parking Office on the Westside campus, the Westside Classroom Building, Rm. 247D. Hours of operation are Monday - Thursday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Fridays, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information, call (203) 837-3289. In order to obtain a parking permit, a student must present a valid vehicle registration document from the state in which the vehicle is registered. Each student will be issued only one active parking permit at a time and may register only one primary vehicle at a time. For more information, visit the website at [wcsu.edu/parking](http://wcsu.edu/parking). Your first permit is free; however, there is a \$10 charge for replacement permits.

Visitors to either campus should park in designated visitor lots. If you park in the Old Main lot and know that you will be there for more than one hour, you must obtain a visitor permit from the University Police Dept. on Roberts Avenue. For more information, please visit the website at [wcsu.edu/parking](http://wcsu.edu/parking).

Vehicles that are improperly parked are subject to ticketing and towing at the owner's expense. All parking areas are clearly identified by signs posted at the entrance to each lot. To avoid having your car towed from an authorized area, please read and obey the signs. All persons parking on state property are obligated to know and obey the university parking regulations which are available at the University Police Dept. Parking Office on the Westside campus, the university police department on Roberts Avenue or on-line at the police department's homepage, [wcsu.edu/police](http://wcsu.edu/police). University parking regulations and Connecticut motor vehicle laws are subject to enforcement by the university police department and violation may result in the issuance of a state court summons or an arrest.

WCSU is a very active community for both vehicle and pedestrian traffic. Please use caution when traveling on campus. Pedestrians are asked to use the crosswalk or the covered skyway when crossing White Street. Accidents should be reported to the university police at (203) 837-9300; emergencies can be reported by dialing 911 from any on-campus phone. Calls for assistance with vehicle problems may also be made to the university police.

For more information please contact the University Police Department at (203) 837-9300, the Police Department Parking Office at (203)-837-3289 or the community services unit at (203) 837-9319.

## **Campus Transportation**

When classes are in session, the university offers a free shuttle bus service between the Westside and Midtown campuses. This service links the two campuses for curricular as well as co-curricular activities.

Arrival and departure times are listed in the Colonial Shuttle Schedule and Policy brochure which is available from the WestConnect Card Office, the Student Center, the Community Service Unit office in the Westside classroom building and the University Police Department. The schedule is also available on-line at the University Police Department's homepage at [www.wcsu.edu/police](http://www.wcsu.edu/police).

For more information please contact the University Police Department at (203) 837-9300 or the community services unit at (203) 837-9319.

## **Student IDs/Access & Security/Parking Permits**

WestConnect Card Office, 013 Old Main

Hours: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. — 12:30 p.m and 1:30 p.m. — 4 p.m.

Phone: (203) 837-9311

[www.wcsu.edu/westconnect](http://www.wcsu.edu/westconnect)

\*Check web site for extended hours\*

#### *Student ID (WestConnect ID Card)*

The university's student identification card is required in order to:

- Access university facilities
- Enter 5th Ave Garage Parking
- Attend events
- Borrow library books
- Use the 24-hour computer labs
- Access shuttle bus service
- Use meal plan
- Make purchases with CONNect Cash

#### *To Receive your WestConnect ID Card*

Present a valid photo ID and a copy of your class schedule at the WESTCONNect Card Office.

#### *Lost, Stolen or Vandalized ID Cards*

Vandalized cards include cards that are broken, bent, chipped, cracked or damaged in some way. Cards that have been lost, stolen or vandalized will be replaced for a \$15 fee charged to your student account.

Cards that are no longer functional due to wear and tear, data error or card malfunction will be replaced at no charge, if the current failed card is presented at the WestConnect Card Office.

#### *CONNect Cash*

You can place money on your WestConnect Card to use at food service, laundry and bookstore locations. A minimum deposit of \$20 can be made on-line or at the Cashier's Office, first floor of Old Main. For more information, access [wcsu.edu/westconnect](http://wcsu.edu/westconnect).

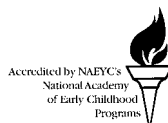
#### *Door Access*

Student Access to the 24-hour computer labs is obtained by registering a 4-digit Pin number with the WestConnect Card Office. Additional door access is granted by department chair approval only.

For more information on any of the above services, please call the WestConnect Card Office at (203)837-9311 or access our Web site at [wcsu.edu/westconnect](http://wcsu.edu/westconnect).

### **Childcare at WestConn**

The WCSU Child Care Center, operated by Education Connection and accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, offers childcare in its facility in Alumni Hall on the Middtown campus. The Center provides a developmentally appropriate early childhood program as well as a safe environment for children ages 3-5. To register your child, or for further information, visit the Center or call (203) 837-8733.



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## **Division of Graduate Studies & External Programs**

### **Mission, Role and Scope of Graduate Programs**

The graduate programs at WestConn offer advanced study under the direction of dedicated educators. Students in the graduate programs benefit from a faculty whose commitment to teaching, to research, and other professional activities has resulted in national recognition in widely-varying fields. Guidance from this faculty helps to strengthen the academic and professional ability of students by increasing their knowledge of a subject, improving their capacity for independent study, familiarizing them with research in their fields, and training them to conduct meaningful research of their own.

The mission of the graduate programs is not confined within the perimeters of the university. The programs also make a significant contribution to the community at large. As a result of their intense, concentrated study at WestConn, students are well prepared to enter society, not only as trained professionals and specialists, but also, in a wider context, as thoughtful, sensitive human beings with personal integrity and an appreciation of intellectual and political freedom.

Much of this understanding is developed in professional in-service and pre-service programs through cooperative efforts with regional businesses, industry, government, social service and educational agencies. WestConn's faculty and programs are dedicated to forging and maintaining such ties through the ongoing assessment of regional needs and continual interaction with community, business, professional, and academic organizations — an interaction which also helps to refine the graduate curriculum.

### **Graduate Dean and Graduate Council**

The dean of graduate studies and external programs is advised by the Graduate Council, a faculty body with representation from each discipline. The council is responsible for recommending overall graduate policy, approving programs, and maintaining high standards. Program proposals developed by academic departments, working with their school deans, must be approved by the Graduate Council before implementation.

### **Graduate Program Coordinators**

Each graduate program has a qualified faculty member who serves as graduate coordinator.

The coordinators are members of the Graduate Council and leaders in program development. A strength of graduate study at WestConn is that students enrolled in graduate programs are advised directly by the appropriate program coordinator as they plan their progress toward their degree.

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## **Admission to Graduate Programs**

### **Application Requirements**

Criteria for admission to graduate study at Western Connecticut State University include both qualitative and quantitative requirements to ensure that applicants possess the educational preparation to succeed academically at the graduate level. The criteria are established by the Graduate Council and approved by the provost and vice president for academic affairs and WestConn's president. No applicant is denied admission on the basis of sex, race, creed or national origin.

### **Application Procedures**

Students may register for graduate classes on a matriculated (degree-seeking) or non-matriculated (non-degree seeking) basis. All students registering for graduate classes must hold a baccalaureate degree or its equivalent and must demonstrate ability to pursue graduate studies.

Prior to registration, prospective students must apply to the Division of Graduate Studies. Applicants must provide:

- A completed application, along with the application fee
- Official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended
- Proof of all prerequisite requirements, including minimum GPA
- Proof of immunization form for all students born after 1956
- A current RN license for prospective nursing students
- A current teacher's license for prospective education and educational psychology students
- Appropriate test scores where required

Application materials may be requested from the Division of Graduate Studies and External Programs, Old Main 206, by calling (203) 837-8244. Or, prospective students may visit the Web site at [www.wcsu.edu/graduate](http://www.wcsu.edu/graduate) and download the graduate application.

Prospective students are encouraged to read the relevant sections of this catalog, including the portions that describe the degree program in which they are interested. General questions should be addressed to the