



Worcester Polytechnic Institute



Parents & Friends Newsletter

B-Term 2023-24

Unlocking Meaningful Conversations with Your College Student

By Charlie Morse, Dean of Student Wellness

“How do I get my kids to really talk to me?”

It’s a question I often field from parents and guardians, and the answer I provide involves two things: genuine curiosity and open-ended questions. Students’ worlds have changed so much since moving into the college phase of their lives; what’s it really like for them? Try asking some of the sample questions below and really listening to your student’s answers. Remember, no problem-solving allowed unless requested.)



- Tell me about your experience on campus this past fall—what have been some of the highs and lows for you? How does this year compare with past years?
- I’d love to hear more about your classes—which ones did you find most interesting? Considering your classroom experiences, what are your thoughts about your current major?
- Seven-week terms sound pretty fast-paced and stressful; what have you been doing to manage stress while at school?

- I read a lot about mental health issues on college campuses these days ... tell me how things are with mental health at WPI.

Instead of focusing on outcomes or achievements, be sure to use the conversation to share your sense of pride in who they are and highlight characteristics that make them special (for instance, persistence, kindness, curiosity).

The Latest from the Housing & Residential Experience Center (Formerly Residential Services)

Mark your calendars—residence halls reopen at 9am on Sunday, January 7.

The housing application for the next academic year will be available from Tuesday, January 16 through Friday, March 1, with programming, information sessions, and roommate meet-and-greets held regularly throughout C-Term. The selection process for those who have completed housing applications will take place the week of March 11. [Visit the website](#) or reach out to housing@wpi.edu with questions or for more information on the 2024-25 housing selection process.

The Housing & Residential Experience Center will raffle off a studio single placement on campus next year! Interested students may stop by East Hall on Friday, February 9, to enter. **Please note: the winner will be responsible for the full cost of the housing assignment.**

2023 Year in Review

Okay, we may not have raindrops on roses and whiskers on kittens (nor bright copper kettles and warm woolen mittens), but we do have robots on drums and those that can buzz (really, no one can achieve like WPI does). So before you finish wrapping your brown paper packages tied up with strings, we invite you to [see the cheer a year at WPI brings](#).



Where in the World Are WPI Students This Term?

WPI's Global Projects Program continues to bring students into communities around the world where they work on projects in collaboration with local partners. As students spend time at a project center this B-Term, they'll build relationships within those communities, gaining an understanding of the social and cultural context of their projects, while learning about the people who call the region home. From South Africa

and New Mexico to Japan and Albania, [check out where](#) students worked on projects in B-Term.

FAFSA Updates

The 2024–25 FAFSA will be available to file on December 31, 2023. This one-time delayed release comes with changes to the 2024–25 FAFSA via the [FAFSA Simplification Act](#), which will reduce the number of required questions on the form, expand Pell Grant eligibility, and remove outdated restrictions to make student aid more accessible to all.

- **Wednesday, March 13, 2024, 4–5pm ET:** [In-person presentation for students](#)
- **Wednesday, March 20, 2024, 6–7pm ET:** [Zoom presentation for families and/or students](#)

For returning students, the 2024–25 FAFSA is due **May 1, 2024**.

Spring 2024 Financial Literacy Events

The Office of Financial Aid hosts monthly financial literacy presentations on topics like budgeting, outside scholarships, global project payment, student loans, and more. Students may view and register for upcoming events on [MyWPI](#), or email finaid@wpi.edu to share an idea for a financial literacy topic.

Upcoming Events from the Heebner Career Development Center (HCDC)

From networking events and information sessions with employers to interviewing and salary negotiation resources, students have access to a wealth of opportunities through the HCDC. [Check out their website](#) for the latest information on upcoming workshops, talent tabling sessions, and career fairs. Future highlights:

- **Thursday, February 8:** Resumazing and Networking Hour (4–7pm, Heebner Career Corner, Unity Hall, 5th floor)
- **Thursday, February 15:** Spring 2024 in-person career fair (noon–4pm, Sports & Recreation Center)
- **Tuesday, February 20:** Virtual Spring Career Fair (noon–4pm ET, Handshake)

Submit Your Engraved Brick Order Today

Over 7,000 WPI alumni, faculty, staff, and friends have left their mark on WPI through an [engraved brick on the Centennial Walkway](#) on the Quad, and your student has the opportunity to do the same. Dedicated in 1991, the Walkway has become a valued tradition at WPI. [Bricks may be ordered here](#) for \$100, which includes three lines of engraving and installation. **Orders must be received by March 1 for 2024 installation.** Please contact the Office of Lifetime Engagement at 508-831-5600 or alumni-office@wpi.edu with any questions.



Fall 2023 WPI Journal now available!

Take flight with the [latest issue of the WPI Journal](#) and read how pioneering fighter pilot Stacey Cotton Bonasso '90 is inspiring the next generation as a high school STEM teacher. Learn how robots created by WPI researchers and alumni are working alongside humans to reinforce the skills of physical therapists, explore inaccessible areas, complete tedious and physically demanding work, and shoulder dangerous tasks—real-life examples of how robots are essential tools in a high-tech, hybrid workplace of the future. Other stories feature new high school science teacher Paul Pacheco '22, MS '23, marshmallow entrepreneur Moe Young '03, Director of Global Risk Colin Watters, and juggling game designer and assistant professor Melissa Kagen.



Freshly Baked News from Tech Eats

Tech Eats is proud to maintain, broaden, and improve all aspects of your student's on-campus dining experience. [Check out the flyer](#) to see a full update on all things

dining at WPI, including January 2024 dining hours, new campus dining concepts, and other resources.

Let's Go, Goats—All Things Athletics at WPI

Visit the [Athletics website](#) to keep up-to-date on all things WPI Athletics, including schedules, feature stories, postgame recaps, and more. [Livestreams and on-demand recordings of home contests](#) are also available, and live updates are regularly posted on [X \(Twitter\)](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#), with additional content posted via [YouTube](#).



The Latest from The Global School

The Global School continued its Forum Series in conjunction with the New England Council of Latin American Studies Conference held at WPI. The next speaker, Benjamin Sovacool, will discuss affordable and clean energy in an [event open to all on February 1](#).

Students who applied for off-campus 2024-25 IQPs have been notified of their placements; please take time over the holiday break to discuss next steps with your student. Recruitment for Humanities & Arts Requirement off-campus programs is ongoing, and students may [visit the website](#) for more information on project centers and the application process. You or your student may also contact the Global Experience Office directly with any questions at global@wpi.edu.

Fraternity & Sorority Life at WPI

WPI's got one of the best Greek Life communities in the country, with 13 of 20 chapters earning recognition from their national headquarters. If your student recently joined a fraternity or sorority, you may have questions, and we've got answers—you may also visit [WPI's Greek life website](#) for more information.

- **What are the benefits of “going Greek”?** Students involved in Greek Life at WPI have a 93% 4-year graduation rate and create a network of friendships that will last during their time in college and beyond.
- **How will this impact my student's academics?** Academics are the number one priority and expectation of Greek chapters at WPI, with the average GPAs of Greek members higher than those of other WPI students.

- **What does Greek Life cost?** Each chapter's membership fees and dues vary—students may reach out to the chapter treasurer for specific information.
- **What resources are available to each organization?** Each chapter's support system includes the national chapter's leadership consultants, local alumni advisors, and WPI faculty advisors, as well as myriad online resources.

Getting Involved on Campus

Is your student looking for ways to get involved on campus? The Student Activities Office has them covered—from themed trivia nights and local weekend trips to digital signage and bulletin boards around campus, here are a few programs they can check out, as well as ways for them to stay up-to-date on the latest campus happenings.



- **MyWPI:** A great resource for students to connect with their peers and clubs on campus, [MyWPI](#) lists clubs, events, and activities for students to explore and participate in.
- **Social Media:** The Student Activities Office is on [Instagram](#), [TikTok](#), and [Facebook](#), all of which are great places to see the latest updates of what's happening around campus.
- **Late-Night Programming:** Every Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday night each term, students may participate in activities like Taylor Swift Trivia, Squishmallow Bingo, movie nights, game nights, and more.
- **Weekend Trips Program:** From ice skating and bowling to trips to the Natick Mall and Railers hockey games, students get the chance to have some fun each week exploring the Worcester area.

Upcoming Events and Important Dates

- **Sunday, January 7:** Residence halls reopen for spring, 9am
- **Wednesday, January 10:** First day of C-Term and spring semester
- **Monday, January 15:** Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (no classes)
- **Wednesday, January 17:** Last day to [add or drop a course](#) for C-Term (no fee to add)

- **Thursday, January 18:** [Peace of Mind: The Best Gift of 2024](#) Informational estate planning session, 6:45–8pm ET, Zoom
- **Wednesday, January 24:** Last day to [add or drop a course](#) for C-Term (with fee to add) and spring semester
- **Wednesday, January 24:** [Completion of degree requirements/thesis or dissertation](#) deadline for B-Term/fall semester projects
- **Tuesday, January 30:** [Performance by master percussionist Marcus Santos](#), 1–2pm, Alden Memorial
- **Friday, February 9:** [Wellness Day](#) (no classes)
- **Thursday, February 15:** Last day for graduate students to withdraw from C-Term courses
- **Thursday, February 22:** Academic Advising Day (no classes)

Office of the Dean of Students

Worcester Polytechnic Institute

100 Institute Road

Worcester, MA 01609-2280

Ph: +1-508-831-5201

wpi.edu/parents

