About WUSTL

Who We Are Today

Washington University, a medium-sized, independent university, is dedicated to challenging its faculty and students alike to seek new knowledge and greater understanding of an ever-changing, multicultural world. The university is counted among the world’s leaders in teaching and research, and draws students from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Students and faculty come from more than 100 countries around the world.

The university offers more than 90 programs and almost 1,500 courses leading to bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees in a broad spectrum of traditional and interdisciplinary fields, with additional opportunities for minor concentrations and individualized programs. For more information about the university, please visit: http://wustl.edu/about/facts.

Undergraduate Enrollment by School

http://wustl.edu/about/facts/#students

Committed to Our Students: Mission Statement

Washington University’s mission is to discover and disseminate knowledge, and protect the freedom of inquiry through research, teaching and learning. Washington University creates an environment to encourage and support an ethos of wide-ranging exploration. Washington University’s faculty and staff strive to enhance the lives and livelihoods of students, the people of the greater St. Louis community, the country and the world.

Our goals are:

• to welcome students, faculty and staff from all backgrounds to create an inclusive community that is welcoming, nurturing and intellectually rigorous;
• to foster excellence in our teaching, research, scholarship and service;
• to prepare students with attitudes, skills and habits of lifelong learning and leadership thereby enabling them to be productive members of a global society; and
• to be an institution that excels by its accomplishments in our home community, St. Louis, as well as in the nation and the world.

To this end we intend:

• to judge ourselves by the most exacting standards;
• to attract people of great ability from diverse backgrounds;
• to encourage faculty and students to be bold, independent and creative thinkers;
• to provide an exemplary, respectful and responsive environment for living, teaching, learning and working for present and future generations; and
• to focus on meaningful measurable results for all of our endeavors.

Teaching and Learning at Washington University

A Statement of Best Practices and Expectations

Original statement endorsed by the Undergraduate Council, November 10, 1999.
Amended statement endorsed by the Undergraduate Council, February 2, 2010.

All members of the Washington University community share responsibility for creating an atmosphere conducive to learning. A collaborative learning environment involves the active participation of both instructors and students in the classroom and in activities outside the classroom. This environment requires:

• the best effort on the part of both faculty and students to enhance the learning experience for the benefit of all persons involved;
• the recognition that all present play important roles, all participants in the learning experience deserve respect for what they bring to it, and all should be sensitive to the importance of the others in this process;
• an atmosphere in the classroom of mutual respect for all persons regardless of political, ethnic, religious, gender, sexual orientation and disability considerations.

In response to changing classroom dynamics we the Undergraduate Council make the following recommendations:

Expectations and responsibilities of the faculty: The faculty member is involved in several major roles, including those of teacher, scholar-researcher and citizen in the university. For the unimpeded performance of these functions, the faculty member is guaranteed academic freedom. At the same time, the faculty member has clear responsibilities to the students and to the institution, particularly in her/his role as teacher. Instructors should provide the basic outlines for the learning experience and provide guidance as appropriate, generally in the form of a handout or easily accessible electronic document. Such guidance should normally involve:

• the presentation of a syllabus that:
  (A) clearly identifies the goals of the course and its prerequisites, a schedule of major assignments and examinations, explicit criteria for how student work will be evaluated;
(B) contains a clear articulation of ground rules for classroom interaction and consequences for infringement (How much active participation is expected of the student? Is attendance required? If the course meets over the lunch hour, is it acceptable to eat during class? Is it acceptable to use laptop computers in class?);

- reminding students of the university’s standards for academic integrity;
- bringing new perspectives and insights to assigned readings and other text materials;
- regularly meeting class and being punctual in starting and dismissing class;
- prompt and responsible grading, with evaluative comments and opportunities for students to discuss their grades with the faculty member;
- adherence to the announced office hour schedule and offering as many avenues as possible for contact, including by telephone and email;
- the use of appropriate technology as relevant both in and outside the classroom to enhance communication between faculty and students;
- uploading course materials and sending emails in a timely manner;
- the oversight of Teaching Assistants, especially to ensure grading uniformity in large classes;
- facilitation of regular student evaluations of the faculty member’s teaching methods and materials, including mid-semester evaluations, as a means of creating an atmosphere of shared responsibility within the classroom;
- when possible, avoiding prohibitive costs when ordering textbooks and other course materials, and making electronic text available;
- adhering to the published final examination schedule to avoid interfering with students’ preparation for other classes.

**Expectations and responsibilities of the students.** Students must take responsibility for their own learning. Students also share with the instructor the responsibility for providing an environment conducive to learning. Students should personally:

- be actively engaged with the material and with the process of education;
- build their own knowledge and skills (faculty guide students to materials and methods, but the learning is up to the student);
- attend all classes, both lecture and discussion sessions, and participate in class discussions; leave class only for emergencies; use streaming video recording of lectures only for review, not as a substitute for class;
- be punctual in completing assignments;
- behave in the classroom in a manner that demonstrates respect for students and faculty;
- share responsibility for the flow of information concerning a course by regularly checking the course web page and university email;
- be familiar with and adhere to matters of academic integrity as identified by their school within the university;
- participate in objective and constructive evaluations of the instructor and of the course (this helps to clarify problems and strengths that will help the instructor to improve the course in subsequent semesters);
- conform to the rules for laptop use stated in the syllabus;
- refrain from the use of texting and cell phones.

**Special student concerns.** Students should take the initiative in discussing special arrangements with the instructor in a timely manner when for any reason they miss class. Students also should recognize that the collective needs of the faculty and other students in a course may outweigh individual preferences. Faculty should be sensitive to individual student needs for special arrangements:

- to accommodate disabilities, illnesses, family emergencies or academic or professional opportunities that interfere with usual class attendance or performance;
- when students miss class because of religious holidays.

**Responsibilities of the university administration.** For its part, the university administration must:

- continue to provide facilities and ensure adequate classroom and laboratory space that is stocked with sufficient appropriate equipment;
- give priority to supporting both faculty and students in teaching and learning;
- be responsive when normal communications between faculty and students break down by providing for a process for discussion and negotiations;
- facilitate communications among various constituents of the university;
- facilitate the flow of visitors to the classroom by notifying faculty of such matters in a timely fashion.

**Where to get help**

**For instructors:** The departmental chair, the Teaching Center, colleagues and the relevant dean’s office can offer very useful advice on teaching techniques, materials, and methods.

**For students:** The instructor, the TAs and Cornerstone: The Center for Advanced Learning can be counted on for guidance on how best to learn; the Writing Center can be a very helpful resource for all sorts of written assignments.

The general process of a student concern is to:

1. raise it first with the faculty member,
2. go to their four-year adviser, and
3. then to the department chair.
Disagreements that have not been resolved by this process can be addressed to the ombudsperson.

**Class Size**

More than three-fourths of Washington University’s undergraduate classes range from one to 24 students. We believe smaller classes help students learn more through stimulating group discussion. Many classes may be larger at first, but they generally become smaller as students progress in their chosen fields.

Depending on the department, classes may be smaller or larger.

**Average Class Sizes by Level**

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<th>L-200</th>
<th>L-300</th>
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<td>123</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
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**University College**

University College is the evening division of Arts & Sciences and offers a wide range of courses in a variety of academic departments and interdisciplinary and professional areas of study. Part-time and full-time study in undergraduate degree programs, graduate degree programs, and certificate programs is available. In addition, University College offers several special credit programs, such as the College Credit Program for high school students, and special noncredit programs, such as short courses, writing workshops and career workshops. For more information, visit http://ucollege.wustl.edu .