

Academic Programs of Distinction

Academic Programs of Distinction - Please identify your university's top 3 or 4 Program Areas of Distinction (An Academic Program of Distinction is defined as a two-digit CIP level which includes general groups of related programs such as Business and Education. You may also use related areas that cross CIP codes such as Visual and Performing Arts or Allied Health Professions. STEM as a Program of Distinction is too broad but Technology and Engineering or Engineering and Math would be a suitable Program of Distinction.) Please provide a brief rationale or narrative as to what makes these programs distinctive.

Academic Program Area of Distinction 1: Management and Administration (CIP Codes 52 and 44.0401)

- **52 Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Service (52.02, 52.03, 52.06, 52.11, 52.14)**
The School of Business within the College of Business and Public Affairs houses business programs that are all AACSB accredited. AACSB-accredited schools have the highest quality faculty, relevant and challenging curriculum, and provide educational and career opportunities that are not found at other business schools. AACSB accreditation represents the highest standard of achievement for business schools worldwide. AACSB-accredited schools produce graduates that are highly skilled and more desirable to employers. In addition, a new B.S. in International Business is being submitted for approval at the April BOG meeting. If approved, the program would be the only International Business major offered by an AACSB-accredited System university in the eastern part of the state.
- **44.0401 Public Administration Program**
The Master of Public Administration is the only NASPAA accredited program in the State System. Further, the program is only one of five NASPAA accredited program in the Commonwealth, joining the ranks of Penn State, Carnegie Mellon, University of Pittsburgh and Villanova. NASPAA is the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs and Administration. NASPAA is the gold standard accreditation for schools of public policy and administration. The accreditation evaluates faculty and the curriculum to ensure quality. In addition, the department developed and now offers the first Doctor of Public Administration (DPA) in the State System.

Academic Program Area of Distinction 2: Urban Education and Leadership

- **13.0410 Youth Empowerment and Urban Studies**
Unique in country, the Youth Empowerment program minor is open to all students and combines a focus on social change among urban youth with learning the theory and practice of popular movements and education. The core of the program is experiential learning. Students interested in careers in public policy, social work, government, psychology, language and literacy, education/teaching, sociology, and criminal justice will benefit from the connections, experiential learning and skills and knowledge gained through the minor. This minor helps to provide school districts with teachers who understand diversity and local context; non-profits with creative and critical thinkers who have had leadership experience; and businesses, such as banks and real estate agencies, with employees who can work effectively with members of the community.

Academic Program Area of Distinction 3: Health Professions and Related Programs (CIP Code 51)

- **51.1102 Pre-Medical Program**
While the pre-medical program is not a baccalaureate degree, it prepares students in a number of majors (pre-and post-baccalaureate) for application to the health professional schools of medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, optometry, podiatry, physician assistant programs, as well as careers in biomedical research. Students are advised both academically and professionally so that they will be better prepared for professional schools. The program includes several early assurance programs with professional schools including medical, veterinary, and dental and physician assistant schools. These affiliations benefit WCU students by allowing them to apply to professional schools early and receive provisional acceptance to these schools, thereby reducing the stress and costs of applying to multiple professional schools. For over forty years, the placement rate for students who are recommended by the Pre-Medical Committee has been approximately 95 percent.
- **51.0806 Adapted Physical Education Program**
This program encompasses two minors, the adapted physical activity minor and the deaf studies minor. The adapted physical activity minor is one of approximately five adapted physical education minors in the United States and also includes aspects of this field such as disability sport, pre-physical therapy and pre-occupational therapy majors. Content from adapted physical activity may be useful for other majors to incorporate into their future practices. The program also consists of an on-campus service learning component, which adds greatly to the value of this program. Annually, students provide about 3,000 hours of community service, volunteering for such programs as an adapted physical education program, adapted lifetime fitness program, and Special Olympics teams.

Academic Programs of Distinction (Continued)

- **51.0806 Adapted Physical Education Program (Continued)**

The minor in deaf studies enables students to have a greater awareness of, understanding of, and expertise in the deaf community, including their culture and language. Practical applications of language use, cultural appreciation and understanding of deafness from a diversity viewpoint are stressed through three minor tracks. The minor prepares students from various majors to better understand the population in which they provide services (diversity track), the culture in which the deaf individual is a member (culture track), and develop proficiency in the cultural language of American Sign Language (language track). The deaf studies minor is open to any WCU student.

- **51.2399 Athletic Training**

The B.S. in Athletic Training within the department of sports medicine in the College of Health Sciences has been preparing athletic trainers since 1971. The profession of athletic training prepares individuals prevent, treat, rehabilitate, and recondition injury and illnesses in the active population. WCU's athletic training program was one of the first six National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) approved Athletic Training education programs in the United States and the very first in Pennsylvania to offer a recognized pathway to prepare students to become athletic trainers. According to the most recent three-year aggregate statistics by the Commission of Accreditation for Athletic Training Education, West Chester University boasts the second largest athletic training program in the country based on the number of students graduating each year (32) and the number who pass their certification exam each year (31). WCU athletic training graduates have an overall first time pass rate of 85% on the Board of Certification exam, considerably above the national average of 78% for bachelor's degree programs. It is important to note that responding to changes in both employment demand and accreditation standards, the program will phase into a recently BOG-approved Master of Science in Athletic Training in Fall 2017.

- **51.3102 Clinical Nutrition/Nutritionist**

WCU offers a thriving and nationally known major in nutrition. Campbell Soup Company selects a junior or senior nutrition major to participate in its summer internship program. WCU interns work in the global nutrition and regulatory team at Campbell's world headquarters in Camden, N.J. Campbell's also offers the V8 Protein Student Ambassador program, exclusive to WCU nutrition majors. Campbell's chooses 10 majors to be ambassadors with the task of promoting the V8 protein product via social media. Four students are selected as winners and are invited to headquarters for a tour of the facilities and networking opportunities with nutrition and industry professionals.

- **51.2006 Clinical and Industrial Drug Development**

The Pharmaceutical Product Development program is one of only a few degree-granting programs in the nation that focuses on the pharmaceutical industry. Situated in the heart of the U.S. pharmaceutical industry hub, WCU is ideally situated to prepare students for careers in this rapidly changing industry. The curriculum for the degree is interdisciplinary in nature and was established in conjunction with industry experts. Students acquire foundational training in biology, chemistry and pharmaceutical sciences, as well as experience in technical writing, statistical computing, economics, and biomedical ethics. A unique feature of the program is capstone courses that introduce aspects of the pharmaceutical industry that are not normally presented in an academic environment including regulatory affairs, high-throughput screening and computer design of drugs. In order to present the most up-to-date information about these subjects, some of these lectures are given industry experts. In addition, summer internships in the biopharmaceutical industry are required. This novel program prepares graduates for both the pharmaceutical industry and careers in medicine, biomedical research and pharmacy.

- **51.0908 Respiratory Care**

West Chester University, in conjunction with Bryn Mawr Hospital, offers a Bachelor of Science degree in respiratory care. Respiratory care professionals evaluate, treat, and care for patients with breathing disorders. Patients include premature infants, those with lung disease, and those requiring assistance from life support technology. The uniqueness of this relationship allows for immediate access to state-of-the art medical equipment and to medical personnel, as well as clinical affiliate relationships (currently 14 clinical affiliates). During the past three years, students in the program have had a 100 percent pass rate on the National Board for Respiratory Care's Written Secured Self-Assessment Exam. The program has CoARC recognition for Distinguished Registered Respiratory Therapist Credentialing Success (2014).

- **14.0501 Biomedical Engineering and 14.3501 Industrial and Operations Engineering**

It is important to note that WCU has submitted LOIs for two engineering programs that are clearly tied to this academic area of distinction, building on our strong foundation. The B.S. in Biomedical Engineering would focus on bioinstrumentation, biomechanics, biomaterials, and bioinformatics while the B.S. in Industrial and Operations Engineering would focus on processes and systems to eliminate waste, improve quality, and improve productivity within the healthcare industry.