



NEWS RELEASE

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UW-Stout Polytechnic's healthy fall enrollment growth confirmed to be among strongest in state

Increase in students, program growth follows polytechnic name change

[Story Link](#)

Photos attached

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oct. 30, 2026

Note to editors and news directors: This is an updated version of the news release sent Sept. 14.

MENOMONIE, Wis. – University of Wisconsin-Stout Polytechnic has opened the 2026-27 academic year with some of the strongest enrollment growth across 13 campuses of the Universities of Wisconsin, once again demonstrating the draw of a polytechnic education.

Total enrollment at UW-Stout Polytechnic grew to 7,274 Blue Devils for the fall 2026 semester, a 3% increase from fall 2025, according to [10th Day headcount figures announced Friday, Oct. 30, by the Universities of Wisconsin](#). The percentage increase was the third largest among the state's 13 public universities.

The enrollment figures show that college-bound students are attracted to UW-Stout Polytechnic because of its commitment to applied learning and research, business and industry partnerships, and career-focused experiences for all students.

“Wisconsin’s Polytechnic University provides a distinct advantage for students seeking more than a theoretical education,” said **Meridith Wentz, vice chancellor for enrollment and quality**.

“Our growth proves the value students expect from UW-Stout Polytechnic — from project-based learning and lab work on Day One to the unmatched return on investment they earn even before graduation.”

Preliminary fall semester enrollment estimates for all 13 public universities in Wisconsin were released in September. Final figures, based upon the number of students enrolled as of the 10th day of classes, were announced Oct. 30.

This semester is the first since the university officially added the word “polytechnic” to its name. In early June, [the UW Board of Regents voted to amend the name “UW-Stout” to “UW-Stout Polytechnic.”](#) solidifying the identity the university has carried for generations, most notably since it was declared Wisconsin’s Polytechnic University in 2007. In just a few months since the name change, enrollment grew faster than the previous year in many of the university’s key degree programs, including [computer and electrical engineering](#), [cybersecurity](#), [computer science](#), [applied math and computer science](#), [construction management](#), [packaging](#), [industrial and product design](#), [game design and development](#), and many others.

Through ongoing and already-completed campus projects – including the [renovation of Heritage Hall](#) and [extensive upgrades to campus labs](#) – UW-Stout Polytechnic is strengthening the infrastructure that underlies these and other programs. The university is also planning additional targeted improvements in the coming years to expand opportunities in emerging technologies such as advanced computing and 3D concrete printing.

In addition to serving as a draw for students, UW-Stout Polytechnic’s identity points toward strong career outcomes for future graduates. Before they graduate, 100% of Blue Devils receive applied learning experiences with hundreds of employers who provide nearly 1,000 co-ops and internships to UW-Stout Polytechnic students annually – more than one-third of which lead to accepted job offers. Within six months of graduation, [99% of Blue Devils are employed or continuing their education](#). In fact, more than 77% of last spring’s graduates were hired even before commencement. Over the past five years, graduates have been hired by [more than 125 firms listed in the Fortune 500](#).

The reasons for UW-Stout Polytechnic’s appeal are clear in terms of dollars and cents as well: Blue Devil bachelor’s degree graduates have average starting salaries of \$59,000 annually. And according to a newly published [report on UW-Stout Polytechnic’s economic impact](#), these graduates will earn an average of \$27,900 more annually than Wisconsinites with high school diplomas alone. Over a career, that means \$1.2 million in additional earnings, a massive return on a student’s investment in a UW-Stout Polytechnic degree.

The economic impact report confirmed that the university – largely through its high-earning alumni – is a statewide economic engine, generating \$857.8 million in additional income for Wisconsin’s economy annually, enough to support 9,400 jobs.

UW-Stout Polytechnic offers more than 70 industry-aligned undergraduate and graduate degrees and 40 professional certificate programs. One of the 13 Universities of Wisconsin, UW-Stout Polytechnic is distinguished by applied learning and research, business and industry collaboration, and career-focused experiences to prepare students for success in engineering, technology, design, management and other fields. Campus labs and studios outnumber traditional classrooms by three to one, and within six months of graduation 99% of graduates are employed, receiving highest-in-the-region average starting salaries.

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Photos

Prospective students and their families tour the UW-Stout Polytechnic campus.

A class in the Jarvis Hall Technology Wing on the first day of classes for the 2026-27 academic year.

Students attend Meet Menomonie, a beginning of semester orientation event, in the Sports & Fitness Center.