





WPI Alumni Against Racism

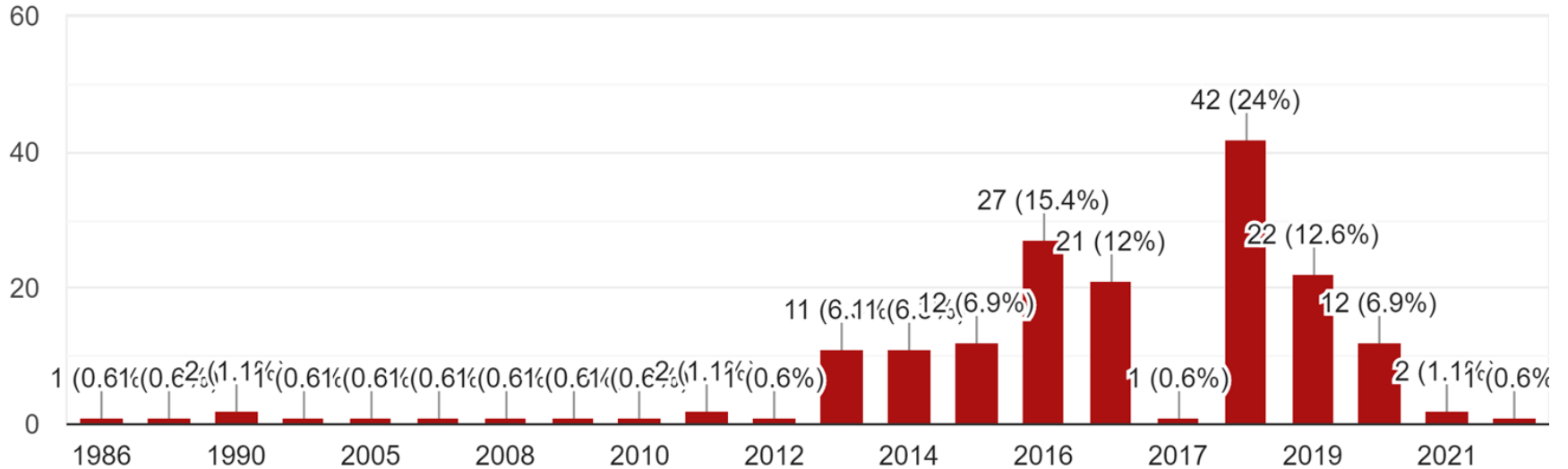
June 6, 2020
6:00pm - 8:00m



Alumni Survey Distribution: 175 responses

Class Year

175 responses



WPI is responsible for creating a positive learning environment for all of its students

- WPI's culture does not support or allow students of color to thrive.
- WPI's culture creates traumatizing situations for students of color.
- WPI has failed to accept, integrate, & celebrate the culture behind diversity statistics.
- Anti-racism education is part of WPI helping students become functional adults.
- The responsibility of diversity education is on the school, not alumni, and should not burden people of color further
- People of color who have joined WPI as students and faculty have left
- Students from privileged backgrounds need education on how to contribute to a positive academic space for people who have felt marginalized
- Alumni and students hold WPI to a higher standard than WPI's response to recent events showed. They expected more and were disappointed.

Recent WPI graduates have experienced overt and ignorant racism at WPI

- Sports - Not invited to team events, quit life-long sport because lack of inclusivity
- From police - At night, dressed in all black, stopped by police (multiple stories)
- From peers
 - Friend playing hip-hop song, student used n***** to describe music & student
 - Student told they were only admitted to fill diversity quota
- From WPI
 - Student never got new advisor after switching majors and reaching out for months - “wildly unhelpful”
 - Student accused of harassing female student of color, immediate assumption of guilt, regardless of lack of evidence and acquaintance testimony. Fears what would have happened if female accuser was white
 - Dean Snoddy sides with sexual abusers and those inflicting racism on students
 - “Leaves a trail of pain”
 - Student who put heart and soul into WPI communities didn’t graduate on time. Even after asking for help, was pushed aside.

Recent WPI graduates have experienced overt and ignorant racism at WPI

- Transition between EMSEP to Connections left EMSEP students behind and didn't keep them in the community
- IQP - students of color will have a different experience and concerns. These students want to have more information available on what to expect
- Staff don't address racial issues properly
 - Ex: The Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the African American Male, the professor did not specify this was specifically done to African Americans. A student had to clarify the facts
- Sensitivity to unnecessary and outdated racial terminology
 - ECE - "Master/Slave" to "Main" and "Secondary" or "Primary" and "Replica"
- Majors like RBE have prohibitive prior knowledge, money needed to succeed+6
- Commuting student with >95 avg work received B not A even after communicating to professor that commute would make her late to presentation. No independent reporting to assist with negotiation with professor. Overall, WPI was "very difficult as a person of color."

Alumni Suggestions for Anti-Racism effort

- Mandatory education in racism, racial history
- Intro to college courses on racial diversity, history, acceptance, and inclusion
- Exit from college courses on workplace environments, covering racism, sexism..
- RA and CA diversity training and support
- Increase transparency on anti-racism efforts, diversity statistics
 - Ex: display percentages, not integers
- Transparent & independent reporting system for culture/interpersonal incidents
- Research effective ways to train professors and educate students on racism prior to implementation - Proper execution is crucial to successful learning
- Reach out to students from disadvantaged backgrounds to provide academic help prior to the base curriculum
- Display black inventors and statistics around their contributions
- Formalize Alumni of Color Association

Alumni Suggestions for Anti-Racism effort

- Publicize education resources such as “Find your major” class
- Publicize graduation and job-finding resources
- Add diversity training to New Student Orientation
- Add scholarships for students of color
- Connections - Introduce students of color to faculty of color
- Allocate specific budget for hiring people with experience and care for diversity
- Use existing toolkits for education (ex: Black Lives Matter toolkit)
- Educate non-minority students on their privilege and how to leverage it to help
- Encourage Black Greek life, and educate current Greek chapters on racial bias
- Add diversity statement to WPI handbook and syllabus
- Wide variety of companies at career fair, with alumni who can confirm inclusive environment

Worcester Community

Campus Police

- More community involvement with student population
- Open dialogue for transparency between police methods and student expectations

Middle & High schools

- Programs have been skewed to Caucasian students
- Research and implement ways to involve students of color

Political awareness and support resources

Can WPI combat the racism in its culture?

Why we are hopeful for change

- WPI has increased the number of students and faculty of color
- WPI has increased the number of female students and faculty
 - Let's take this energy, time, and money, and apply it to diversity improvement efforts
- STEM outreach programming for middle and high schoolers
- Test-optional, project portfolio track for admission
- Employed a diversity officer
- Built a coalition with faculties
- Pilot series on racism
- Office of Multicultural Affairs' "Conscious Coffee Hour"
- Increased percentage of students of color, feels "less cliquy" on campus now
- WPI implementing new scholarship

Can WPI combat the racism in its culture?

Why we worry change won't happen:

- WPI's response to current outrage has been less than satisfactory
- Optics seem more important than sustainable policy and culture changes
- Diversity courses and trainings are voluntary, not mandatory
- WPI has let students of color slip through the system
 - Questionable retention and success of people of color after admission
 - Current students of color would not recommend others join WPI in its current state
- Handshake has few diverse options, and prohibitive login access

Resources for Action

[Register to Vote](#)

[ACLU - Keep Calm and Carry on Voting: How to Vote By Mail During the Coronavirus Outbreak](#)

[NCSL - 2020 Voting Dates](#)

[MA Absentee \(paper\) ballots](#)

[NJ Use of Force data](#)

[Anti-racism resources](#)

[Anti-Racism Resources for Non African Americans](#)