

# Worcester Polytechnic Institute

## Space Program for a New Academic Building

Worcester, Massachusetts



### Project Information

Completion Date  
March 2019

Services Provided  
Space Program

Worcester Polytechnic Institute retained Rickes Associates to develop a 132,000 gross square feet space program for its new SMART-World Institute.

Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) is a private research university in Massachusetts. The four-year academic program centers on the instruction and research of technical arts and applied sciences, with a focus on project-based problem solving. Current enrollment is 6,400 graduate and undergraduate students. The urban campus consists of over 70 buildings, including residential, occupying a hill overlooking New England's second-largest city.

The new academic building proposed for Worcester Polytechnic Institute is envisioned as a dual-function facility. It is intended to house units from several departments to form a "SMART-World Institute," and also to combine various units into a Student Academic Services Center to better serve student needs. The first task for Rickes Associates was to confirm the need for instructional space in the new building. This was accomplished by an Instructional Space Utilization Analysis, taking into account all current teaching spaces on the WPI campus. Up to five active learning classrooms were recommended for inclusion in the new academic building to resolve a campus deficit as well as enable a transition to more interactive pedagogies.

Rickes Associates then worked with selective faculty and staff to develop a space program for assignable square footage for the new facility. This included on-site review of existing administrative suites, classrooms, teaching labs and research labs, coupled with face-to-face interviews with stakeholders, and reviews of similar facilities at peer institutions to test proposed space metrics. The deliverable in this exercise was a descriptive narrative coupled with an Excel spreadsheet indicating space functions and sizes for a new building of between 80,000 and 100,000 ASF.