

ABOUT NEW PALTZ

Mission Statement

Mission

In the proud tradition of SUNY, the State University of New York at New Paltz is committed to providing high quality, affordable education to students from all social and economic backgrounds. We are a faculty and campus community dedicated to the construction of a vibrant intellectual/creative public forum which reflects and celebrates the diversity of our society and encourages and supports active participation in scholarly and artistic activity. SUNY New Paltz is an active contributor to the schools, community institutions and economic/cultural life of our region. We are selective in admitting students who show promise of thriving in a learning environment which is challenging, student-centered, and personalized. Our goal is for students to gain knowledge, skills, and confidence to contribute as productive members of their communities and professions and active citizens in a democratic nation and a global society.

We are the only residential public university in the mid-Hudson region. We offer undergraduate and graduate programs in the liberal arts and sciences which serve as a core for professional programs in the fine and performing arts, education, health care, business, and engineering. Our location in the scenic Hudson Valley midway between the State Capital of Albany and metropolitan New York City provides unique opportunities for enriching our academic programs. We are a diverse faculty of distinguished scholars and artists who collaborate across the disciplines and professional areas to inspire our students to a love of learning, a meaningful engagement with the life of the mind, and an involvement in public service.

Campus-wide Goals We strive to carry out the above philosophy across the campus through:

- Faculty engagement in innovative pedagogy across all disciplines;
- Faculty-student collaboration in research, performance, scholarship, exhibitions and presentations, internships and fieldwork, community service, and international studies and practica;
- Capstone activities through which students can demonstrate expertise in a specialized area;
- Support for risk-taking and innovation in research and scholarly/creative activity;
- Writing intensive courses and seminars;
- Educational and clinical centers that provide professional development and services to the region;
- Library and information technology resources which support the curriculum, independent study, research, and information literacy;
- Lectures, conferences, concerts, gallery shows, theatrical performances (as the largest cultural institution in the Hudson Valley), and other opportunities for life-long learning;
- Leadership opportunities for students in campus and community organizations and college governance;
- A well-rounded program in residence life to support student social, emotional, recreational, and academic needs.

Institutional Learning Outcomes

The motto of the State University of New York is "To Learn. To Search. To Serve." An education at SUNY New Paltz develops knowledge. More

than that, it helps our students recognize that life is complex and worthy of endless curiosity. Our students come away from their classrooms, residence halls, and service activities with an understanding of how the thoughtful application of knowledge and collaborative learning promote active engagement in communities (from local to global), critical reflection, and personal responsibility.

As a student at SUNY New Paltz, you will:

1. acquire a foundation of knowledge that will enable you to engage with different aspects of our world. You will gain exposure to the ways in which artists, humanists, mathematicians, and natural and social scientists address questions about the world and ourselves. You will explore and learn to apply quantitative reasoning, qualitative interpretation, and creative activity as means of addressing those questions.
2. explore questions of identity and community, including reflecting on who you are and your commonality and difference with respect to others. Through interacting with our diverse student body, studying or visiting regions of the world, exploring the activities and communities within and surrounding the university, and learning about diversity within the US and elsewhere, you will become an informed global citizen.
3. learn how to organize, synthesize, and apply many types of information in a variety of formats; make and critique arguments; and express yourself clearly in multiple modes. These analytical, critical, and communicative skills will serve you at the university and beyond.
4. specialize in at least one disciplinary area of knowledge so you can succeed in that field, apply your expertise in other arenas, and/or go on to advanced study prepared to engage confidently with other practitioners or scholars.

You will have the opportunity to:

1. apply your learning within and outside the classroom. Through directed research, internships, and service learning, you experience what you can do with what you know.
2. develop the tools to become a lifelong learner and a productive contributor to learning communities, including SUNY New Paltz.
3. attain an understanding of yourself as a citizen and community member with the knowledge and ability to engage others in progress toward a more sustainable world.

To Learn · To Search · To Serve

History of the Campus

In 1828, the New Paltz Classical School opened its doors on North Front Street, the direct ancestor of the State University of New York at New Paltz. It offered Greek and Latin along with reading, writing, and arithmetic. In 1833, it was reorganized into an academy on Huguenot Street and the banks of the Wallkill River. The academy educated local children until a serious fire in 1884 compelled it to rebuild.

Rather than simply rebuilding, the school shifted its mission, becoming a state normal school that trained teachers for New York State public schools. Even then, New Paltz was innovative; a course of study was available to students interested in subjects beyond teacher training.

Yet another fire destroyed the school in April 1906, and once again it was rebuilt, this time at a new location on a ten-acre hillside plot a mile away. The new building, dedicated in January 1909, still stands as "Old Main." In 1932, the Lawrence H. van den Berg School of Practice, named for the last Normal School principal and the first New Paltz college president

(1923-43) opened. For 50 years, it served as a locus for teacher training and the education of local school children.

The Normal School became an official college with a four-year curriculum in 1938: the State Teachers College at New Paltz. The first bachelor's degrees were awarded to the 112 members of the Class of 1942, and in 1947 the school began offering graduate studies in education.

New Paltz was one of the founding schools in the SUNY system, created in 1948. Under SUNY's umbrella, New Paltz continued to thrive and innovate. Art education was introduced in 1952. Fifty years later, the college's Master of Fine Arts program would be ranked in the top 100 Best Graduate Schools by *U.S. News & World Report*, which also ranked the Metal/Jewelry program No. 1 in the nation. New Paltz, along with Fredonia, in 1960 became the first four-year schools in the system to award the Bachelor of Arts degree. Reflecting this change, the following year the name was changed to State University of New York College of Liberal Arts and Science at New Paltz.

As society changed, the curriculum at SUNY New Paltz changed to meet new needs of New Yorkers. Survey courses in African and Asian cultures were introduced. In 1968, a program in Black Studies was established. Alice Chandler (president from 1980-1996) added professional degree programs in journalism, engineering, business, and nursing. In 1994, the school was renamed once again, as the State University of New York at New Paltz.

In 1991, a power "spike" resulting from an off-campus traffic accident seriously damaged electrical transformers in five buildings on campus, contaminating them with PCBs. The school wasted no time in summoning county and state health departments for guidance on a massive clean-up. In response to this incident, PCBs have not been used on the campus since 1994.

The Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art, which opened in 2001, is one of the largest museums in SUNY, with more than 9,000 square feet of exhibition space in six galleries. The Dorsky's permanent collection comprises more than 5,000 works of American art (with emphasis on the Hudson Valley and Catskill regions), 19th, 20th and 21st-century photography, metals, and a "world collection" of art and artifacts dating back to ancient times and representing diverse cultures. Through its collections, exhibitions, and public programs, the Dorsky supports and enriches the college's academic programs, presents a broad range of world art for study and enjoyment, and serves as a center for Hudson Valley arts and culture.

New Paltz has always embraced international education. In 1901, the college welcomed 50 female students from Cuba. Today, the school has a robust and award-winning study-abroad program that offers students the opportunity to study in 120 countries. In 2015, the college received the Heiskell Award from the Institute for International Education, recognizing its success programming to create study-abroad opportunities for economically disadvantaged and historically underrepresented students.

Today, the State University of New York at New Paltz covers 216 acres and includes the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, the School of Business, the School of Science & Engineering, the School of Fine & Performing Arts, the School of Education, and Graduate & Extended Learning.

Largely as an outgrowth of a forward-looking, 5-year (2008-2013) SUNY capital plan, the physical campus has improved dramatically in the 21st century, including the construction of new residence halls (2001, 2004, and 2015) and major renovation of existing residence halls; the opening of the Athletic and Wellness Center (2006); renovation of the Student

Union Building, including the addition of a now-iconic pyramidal glass "Atrium" (2010); renovation of Old Main (2012), the Sojourner Truth Library (2016) and renovation and repurposing of Wooster Hall (2016); construction of a new science building (2017) and a new "engineering innovation hub" (2019). These changes represent the most significant investment in infrastructure to support the college's educational mission since the Governor Nelson Rockefeller era.

Since launching the Hudson Valley Additive Manufacturing Center in spring 2013, the college's groundbreaking 3D printing initiative has integrated the college's strengths in engineering, computer science, technology, and the arts. New Paltz has added state-of-the-art 3D printing equipment, created an undergraduate minor and a graduate degree program in digital design and fabrication, forged public-private partnerships with industry leaders, garnered over \$12 million in state and private funding, and promoted collaboration among students, faculty and regional businesses on 3D design projects. In partnership with MakerBot, the leading manufacturer of desktop 3D printers, the college opened the nation's first MakerBot Innovation Center in 2014.

In June 2016, SUNY New Paltz was the first institution of higher education to be designated a Stratasys-MakerBot Additive Research & Teaching or SMART lab by Stratasys, the largest 3D printer company in the world. At that time, the College also announced the launch of a new, 18-credit minor in digital design and fabrication—the result of a unique partnership between the Schools of Fine & Performing Arts and Science & Engineering to prepare a new generation of students to conceptualize and design for 21st-century manufacturing. Beginning in fall 2021, the interdisciplinary "DDF" curriculum will be available to graduate students through a Master of Arts degree program, further encouraging research and communication across fields to provide students a foundation in design thinking for a modern world.

Over time, the curricular mission of the school has broadened from the nearly single-track of the Normal School to 143 programs in six schools. All students experience a liberal arts core curriculum coupled with a major in the liberal arts, the arts, the sciences, or a pre-professional offering. All students receiving certification in education must have a liberal arts or sciences major. The college has regularly appeared on *Kiplinger's* list of "100 Best Values in Public Colleges," and continues to climb in *U.S. News and World Report* and *Princeton Review* rankings for the best public regional universities in the Northeast.

From its inception as the Classical School, SUNY New Paltz has established a reputation for excellence and creativity to serve the educational needs of the Hudson Valley and other regions of New York State, a tradition that continues to this day.

For more campus history, visit our [Facebook page](#) and the [Sojourner Truth Library/ College History Collection](#) page.