

# AN INTRODUCTION TO MILLERSVILLE UNIVERSITY

Millersville University of Pennsylvania, located in scenic Lancaster County, is one of the state-owned institutions of higher education that make up Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education.

## History

In the early 1850s, a group of private citizens in Lancaster County decided to sponsor a three-month summer school program that would provide more education for local pupils than what was then available in public schools. The immediate success of that initial program prompted its sponsors to propose that a permanent academy be established. The decision eventually led to the founding of what is now Millersville University.

The academy began in 1854 with the construction of a three-story building containing a small auditorium, two classrooms and housing for 50 students, located on seven-and-one-half acres at the corner of West Frederick and George streets in Millersville. In 1855, just as the building was nearing completion, the trustees saw an opportunity to promote the new school by offering its free use to J.P. Wickersham, the superintendent of Lancaster County Schools, who was searching for a place to hold a three-month teachers' institute.

Wickersham opened his Lancaster County Normal Institute on April 17, 1855, with 147 students each paying \$34 for room, board and tuition for the three-month term. Before the term was over, both Wickersham and the academy trustees agreed that the school should become a permanent normal school.

The Lancaster County Normal School, the first school of its kind in the state, opened on November 5, 1855, in Millersville with approximately 100 students. The original academy building, soon known as "Old Main," was expanded and enlarged over the years and served the college in many capacities until it was razed in 1970. The University's 11-story Francine G. McNairy Library and Learning Forum at Ganser Hall now stands on that site.

Two years after the school's opening, the Normal School Law of Pennsylvania was enacted. It divided the state into 12 normal school districts, with Lancaster, York and Lebanon counties forming the second district. The law also established certain minimum requirements for facilities and curricula. The state legislature, however, enacted no funds for the development of the schools. The trustees at Millersville raised \$20,000 from gifts and subscriptions of stock, at \$25 a share, to finance the expansion necessary to meet the requirements of the law.

On December 2, 1859, Millersville was approved as the first State Normal School. When the school passed completely under the control of the state in 1917, all shares were redeemed at the par value of \$25, ending 62 years of private control.

In 1927, Millersville became a State Teacher's College and was empowered to grant the Bachelor of Science in Education degree. In 1959, the College's name was changed to Millersville State College and a master's program in education was added. In 1962, the College was authorized to grant the Bachelor of Arts degree. In 1982, the Pennsylvania Legislature passed Senate Bill 506, creating the State System of Higher

Education, effective July 1, 1983. On that date, Millersville State College became Millersville University of Pennsylvania.

In 1988, Millersville began offering courses at several sites in the city of Lancaster. Both credit courses and continuing education opportunities were provided to serve the educational needs of Lancaster city residents, area businesses and nontraditional students. In 2011, a downtown Lancaster campus opened at the Ware Center. In 2012, the Winter Visual and Performing Arts Center was opened to provide a creative hub for students, faculty and the surrounding community in music, art and theatre. In fall 2014, graduate programs began at the PASSHE Center City Philadelphia location. Also in 2014, Millersville University initiated its first doctoral programs, a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership and a Doctor of Social Work. Millersville University offered its first fully-online undergraduate completion program in fall 2015 in RN to BSN.

Today, Millersville is proud of its beautiful, well-maintained 250-acre campus abounding with reminders of a long history. The bell from Old Main has been carefully preserved and hung in a dramatic tower. The original library, a lovely brick building built around the turn of the century with turrets, stained glass windows and extensive oak woodwork, has been carefully restored and is now Biemesderfer Center, "the centerpiece of the campus," which overlooks a scenic pond with two resident swans.

## Mission

The mission and vision statements of Millersville University were adopted as part of our strategic plan, Tradition and Transformation. The university mission affirms that we are a community dedicated to high quality education at exceptional value. Our vision states that we will inspire learners to change the world. As a community we are dedicated to our EPPiC Values (<https://www.millersville.edu/about/eppic-values/>): Exploration, Public Mission, Professionalism, Integrity, Inclusion, and Compassion.

## Curriculum and Programs

Millersville University offers a wide array of undergraduate degree programs in art, business, education, humanities, social sciences, mathematics and sciences, most of which offer many options and choices to students. All Millersville undergraduate degree programs include a general education component designed to develop student communication skills and critical-thinking abilities, as well as provide a broad foundation in the liberal arts, humanities, fine arts, and natural and social sciences.

Millersville also offers three doctoral programs and a range of master's degree programs in art, education, humanities, social sciences, mathematics and sciences, as well as selected certification programs.

A number of special educational opportunities are provided, including honors programs, independent study, internships, study at other institutions and abroad, student-designed majors and academic remediation.

Millersville University's faculty, staff and services reflect the University's concern for student growth and development. There are approximately 300 full-time faculty members available to advise and counsel students on academic and career-related matters. There are also counseling, career planning and placement, and tutorial services, as well as services for nontraditional students. A wide range of cocurricular and extracurricular activities and cultural events are offered.

## Accreditation

Millersville University is accredited by the:

- Middle States Commission on Higher Education  
1007 North Orange Street  
4th Floor, MB #166  
Wilmington, DE 198014th Floor
- the Pennsylvania Department of Education;
- and is approved by the American Association of University Women.

The applied engineering and technology management program is accredited by the:

- Association of Technology, Management, and Applied Engineering (ATMAE)  
8865 Norwin Ave STE 27  
North Huntingdon, PA 15642

The art and design programs are accredited by the:

- National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD)  
11250 Roger Bacon Drive, Suite 21  
Reston, VA 20190-5248.

The business administration program is accredited by the:

- Accreditation Council for Business Schools & Programs (ACBSP)  
11520 West 119th Street  
Overland Park, KS 66213.

The Center for Counseling and Human Development is accredited by the:

- International Association of Counseling Services (IACS)  
101 S. Whiting Street, Suite 211  
Alexandria, VA 22304.

The chemistry programs are recognized by the:

- American Chemical Society (ACS)  
1155 16th Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20036.

The computer science program is accredited by the:

- Computing Accreditation Commission of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET)  
415 N. Charles Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201.

The music programs are accredited by the:

- National Association of Schools of Music (NASM)  
11250 Roger Bacon Drive, Suite 21  
Reston, VA 20190-5248.

The nursing programs are accredited by the:

- Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE)  
655 K Street, NW, Suite 750  
Washington, D.C. 20001.

The occupational safety and environmental health program is accredited by the:

- Applied and Natural Sciences Accreditation Commission of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET)

415 N. Charles Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201.

The respiratory therapy program is accredited by the:

- Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC)  
264 Precision Blvd.  
Telford, TN 37690.

The school psychology certification program is in full compliance with the:

- National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)  
4340 East West Highway, Suite 402  
Bethesda, MD 20814.

The social work programs are accredited by the:

- Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)  
333 John Carlyle Street, Suite 400  
Alexandria, VA 22314.

Teacher education programs are accredited by the:

- Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP)  
1140 19th Street, NW, Suite 400  
Washington, D.C. 20036
- Millersville University is a member of the:
  - American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE)  
1602 L Street, NW, Suite 601  
Washington, DC 20036.

The technology education program is in full compliance with the:

- International Technology and Engineering Educators Association (ITEEA)  
1908 Association Drive, Suite C  
Reston, VA 20191

## The Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement Classification

In 2010, Millersville University of Pennsylvania was one of 121 U.S. colleges and universities to earn the inaugural Community Engagement Classification from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Millersville University was reaffirmed to retain the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification in 2020 and currently stands as one of only 243 institutions in the country that hold the elective classification. The Community Engagement Classification recognizes collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.

The foundation, through the work of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, developed the first typology of American colleges and universities in 1970 as a research tool to describe and represent the diversity of U.S. higher education. The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education continues to be used for a wide range of purposes by academic researchers, institutional personnel, policymakers and others.

The application process for the Community Engagement Classification is administered by the New England Resource Center for Higher Education (NERCHE). All information about the Community Engagement

Classification and the list of classified institutions can be found on the NERCHE website at [www.nerche.org](http://www.nerche.org) (<http://www.nerche.org>). Millersville's classification as a Community Engagement institution is valid until 2026.

## The Student Body

Millersville University enrolls approximately 7,200 students. Approximately 68 percent are full-time undergraduates; the rest are part-time undergraduates and graduate students. About 61 percent of undergraduates are women, and one in 10 is at least 25 years old. About 86 percent of Millersville's undergraduates come from southeastern Pennsylvania.

Millersville University admits about 85% of more than 78,000 students who apply each year. Millersville students are above national norms in SAT scores, high school grades and class rank, and in years spent studying college preparatory subjects such as English, mathematics, foreign languages, science and social studies. Approximately 75 percent of the first-year class has combined Evidence-Based Reading and Writing and Math SAT scores over 1000, and approximately 67 percent graduated in the top half of their high school class.

Over 2,100 students live in University residence halls, with the remainder of the student body commuting from homes and nearby apartments.