WISCONSIN CENTER FOR EDUCATION RESEARCH

Facilities, Equipment, and Other Resources

The Wisconsin Center for Education Research (WCER) is one of the oldest, largest, and most productive university-based education research centers in the world. WCER is committed to improving educational outcomes for the nation’s diverse student population, positively impacting education practice, and fostering collaboration among disciplines and with practitioners.

Housed within the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin–Madison (UW–Madison), WCER provides a productive environment where scholars conduct basic and applied education research and development. WCER research spans the full scope of education, from elementary education to undergraduate and graduate curriculum reform. With annual outside funding exceeding $65 million, WCER is home to centers for research on the improvement of mathematics and science education from kindergarten through postsecondary levels, the strategic management of human capital in public education, and value-added achievement, as well as a multistate collaborative project to develop assessments for English language learners, the Minority Student Achievement Network, and Wisconsin’s Equity and Inclusion Laboratory. Other WCER projects focus on leadership, special education, teacher professional development, social capital and children’s development, and education technology, among other topics. WCER also hosts two training programs, one for social science doctoral students conducting research on a broad range of education topics and the other for postdoctoral fellows conducting research on mathematics education. Although most of WCER’s research has a national focus, attention to local and global contexts is also found in the center’s portfolio.

WCER researchers and staff continue to explore critical research subjects and their translation into positive impact on education practice and student learning. Today, WCER research includes the advancement of equitable outcomes and inclusion in education, learning sciences, education policy, school finance and human resource management, English language learning and assessment, STEM education, social studies and literacy, teacher professional development, value-added modeling, and more.

WCER is housed in the Educational Sciences Building, a facility built with matching state and federal funds and dedicated to education research and development. WCER’s Business Office provides projects with budgeting, forecasting, accounting and financial management, and human resource management. A professional editor provides pre-award editorial support and disseminates research through a working paper series. A communications unit further disseminates research findings by coordinating and promoting lectures and other research-related events, as well as by sharing information via print, digital, and social media. Communications vehicles include the WCER website (www.wcer.wisc.edu/) and the sites of colleagues and stakeholders, biweekly and bimonthly newsletters, Twitter, Facebook, videos of lectures and researcher interviews, flyers, the UW–Madison campus news service, and global external media.

The WCER Technical Services Department provides multimedia services, custom software development, graphical design for web and print, and computer support for more than 600 networked computer systems. Data warehousing and network operations are supported by more than 60 servers (actual and virtual), including data warehouse servers running Enterprise MS-SQL 2008R2 on a Windows 2008R2 Server. Security is managed through firewall access rules and active directory. These resources provide WCER with the capability to manage data sets that
contain sensitive student and school information. Technical Services supports multiple graphics and video workstations that facilitate the integration of computer and multimedia technologies. In addition, the department includes a state-of-the-art multimedia studio staffed by multimedia artists, animators, and programmers. In support of collaborative research, WCER has deployed an enterprise-level web-based collaborative environment to facilitate distributed work and data sharing across complex partnerships. This environment is backed up by a relational database for tracking and reporting project activities and outputs, and monitoring project status.

WCER is based in the UW–Madison School of Education, which is consistently ranked one of the top schools of education in the country. In 2019, the school’s dean, Diana Hess, was elected to membership in the National Academy of Education. For 2021, *U.S. News & World Report* ranked the UW–Madison School of Education fourth (tied) in the nation and first among public universities. In the specialty rankings, the School of Education is home to nine programs ranked among the top 10 in the nation: first (tied) in rehabilitation counseling; first (tied) in curriculum and instruction; second in secondary teacher education; third in educational psychology; fourth in education policy; fourth (tied) in educational administration and supervision (tied); fourth in elementary teacher education; fifth in secondary teacher education; sixth in student counseling and personnel services; and sixth in special education.

UW–Madison is recognized throughout the world as one of the great U.S. universities. Founded in 1848, UW–Madison is the flagship campus of the University of Wisconsin System and the original 1862 land grant university in Wisconsin. It continues to be Wisconsin’s comprehensive teaching and research university with a statewide, national, and international mission. The university’s academic reputation has been rated among the best in the country in many areas of study for more than 100 years. *U.S. News & World Report* ranked UW–Madison 13th among U.S. public universities for 2020. The National Science Foundation figures for 2018 show that UW–Madison is eighth in the nation for research and development expenditures. Total UW–Madison funding from federal, state, and private sources exceeds $1.2 billion.