Frequently Asked Questions:

About CUWiP
Eligibility
Application and Registration
Cost and Funding
Travel and Hotel
Miscellaneous
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About CUWiP

What is CUWiP?
The APS Conferences for Undergraduate Women in Physics (CUWiP) are three-day regional conferences for undergraduate physics majors. The 2024 conferences will be held January 19-21, 2024.

The goal of APS CUWiP is to help undergraduate women continue in physics by providing them with the opportunity to experience a professional conference, information about graduate school and professions in physics, and access to other women in physics of all ages with whom they can share experiences, advice, and ideas. The national and local organizing committees of APS CUWiP strive to create a welcoming environment for all, including undergraduate women and gender minorities.

The 2024 program at the United States Military Academy at West Point will include research talks, panel discussions about graduate school and careers in physics, workshops and discussions about women in physics, student research talks and poster sessions, and laboratory tours.

Who is invited to attend CUWiP?
Any undergraduate student with an interest in physics may apply to attend a CUWiP. Undergraduate students are eligible to apply and register for the conference, and we encourage non-undergraduate students or interested faculty/mentors to email westpoint.cuwip@westpoint.edu for details about attendance and participation.
Do I need to have research to present in order to attend the conference?
No. While we encourage you to present a talk or a poster if you have been involved in research, you are welcome to attend the conference and participate in the activities.

I attended last year; can I come to this year’s conference, too?
The content of this year’s conference will not be exactly the same as the previous year’s, and you are welcome to apply to attend again. However, if more students apply than we can accommodate, preference will be given to students who have never attended a CUWiP.

I am a local student. Do I need to register?
Yes, all attendees must register by the deadline, Monday, October 23, 2023 at 5:00pm ET.

I'm a student in a country other than the United States or Canada. Can I apply for CUWiP?
Unfortunately, students studying in a country other than the United States and Canada are ineligible to apply. CUWiP is supported by federal funding which does not support in-person attendance for international students.
I'm a student in a country other than the United States or Canada. Can I apply for CUWiP?  
TBD

I'm a community college student. Am I eligible to apply to CUWiP?  
Yes, undergraduate students at any U.S. college or university are strongly encouraged to apply.

I'm a high school student/grad student/postdoc/faculty member. Am I eligible to apply to CUWiP?  
Only undergraduate students who will be over 18 at the time of the conference may apply to CUWiP. Anyone not in this category should email westpoint.cuwip@westpoint.edu for details about attendance and participation.

I am transgender/gender-fluid/genderqueer/non-binary etc, can I attend this conference?  
Yes, students of all genders are welcome to attend this conference. If you have questions, or concerns about the housing for this conference, please contact us at westpoint.cuwip@westpoint.edu.
Who can attend? Do I need to be a physics major to apply?
Any undergraduate student attending a U.S college/university may apply. You must be over the age of 18 at the time of the conference. High school students are not permitted to apply.

It is very important to complete all parts of the application and to write a thoughtful Applicant Statement. If conferences are oversubscribed, priority will be given to applicants who:
1. Are undergraduate physics or engineering physics majors
2. Have never attended an APS CUWiP

There is no formal application or registration process for non-undergraduate students and interested faculty and mentors. We encourage you to email westpoint.cuwip@westpoint.edu for details about attendance and participation.

What’s the difference between "application" and "registration"?
You apply to attend a CUWiP conference, the CUWiP leadership directs you to a site, the site reviews your application and you are accepted or declined according to the priorities listed above. The application is free and the deadline to apply is Monday, October 23, 2023 at 5:00pm ET.

After you have been accepted, you will register for your accepted site to confirm that you will be attending, and provide specifics, such as special accommodations and dietary restrictions. There is a one-time registration fee of $45, which helps offset some of the cost of the conference. The conference provides all lodging and meals. If necessary, the registration fee can be waived. To request a fee waiver, please contact women@aps.org.
Why can I not apply to a specific site?
As CUWiP is so popular, we need to carefully balance the loads across the sites to minimize travel costs and maximize the number of students who can attend CUWiP. Please do not book travel until you receive an acceptance email and complete registration for a specific site.

Do I need to book my travel before registering?
No, but you should have an estimate of the cost. If you are traveling by air, or long-distance train or bus, and your travel cost is not covered by your department, your travel agenda and cost must be approved by the conference site organizers before you book your travel. Email us at westpoint.cuwip@westpoint.edu for approval. Due to the limited nature of our travel funds, we ask that you find the most economical means of transportation to and from the conference. For example, reach out to others in your department and see if carpooling is an option.

What will increase my chances of being accepted to the conference?
First, make sure you submit your application by the deadline. Second, make sure you put some thought into why you want to attend and what you want to get out of the conference. Please answer all questions on the application fully and honestly. Offering to present a talk or a poster, or indicating interest in travel support, will not affect your chances of being selected to attend.
How much does the conference cost?
Students who are accepted to attend the conference must pay a one-time registration fee of $45, which helps offset some of the cost of the conference, including all lodging and meals. Lodging (for non-local students) and food will be covered by the conference; you do not need to pay for your hotel room or food at the conference. We expect that your travel expenses will be covered by your home department or college. However, if they are not able to cover these expenses, travel funding is available. If you need assistance with funding your travel please contact us at westpoint.cuwip@westpoint.edu.

If you cannot afford the registration fee and your department/college is unable to help, you may request a fee waiver by emailing women@aps.org for the appropriate form. The request takes approximately 48 hours to review. You must request a fee waiver before registering. The deadline to request a fee waiver is on Monday, December 11, 2023 at 5:00 PM ET. Please do not wait until the last minute to request the waiver and/or to register. For more information on fee waivers, contact women@aps.org. Please note that the deadline for students to cancel registration and receive a refund is on Tuesday, January 2, 2024 5:00 p.m. ET. Any cancellations beyond that date are non-refundable.
How do I know the amount my department will contribute to my travel funding?
Please talk to your department chair, manager, or director of undergraduate studies before registering for CUWiP. You might ask an academic advisor, faculty member you know, or other mentor for guidance about who to ask if you are unsure. You can also contact us if you would like guidance in asking your department for travel funds.

My institution would like to cover the registration fee for me and other students in my department. Is there an option to do this?
We offer a payment option for departments who would like a secure way to pay for their students. The request takes approximately 48 hours to review and process. Please contact women@aps.org for more information.
Payment requests must be submitted by Thursday, December 7, 2023 at 5:00pm ET.
How do I arrange travel?
Students are responsible for arranging their own travel to the conference. We encourage students to coordinate with other attendees from their institution. Please contact your department chair or faculty member if your department is reimbursing you for travel costs. If your department cannot fund your travel, please communicate with us at westpoint.cuwip@westpoint.edu for travel ticket approval before purchase.

Can I come late? Can I leave early? Can I skip things that I’m not interested in?
Because your travel costs are reimbursable, it is expected that you will attend all of the conference events as scheduled. If you have special circumstances, please contact us to discuss them at westpoint.cuwip@westpoint.edu.

Where do I stay during the conference?
Students will be accommodated at the Thayer Hotel. Please visit our Travel, Accommodations, and Meals page on our webpage, CUWiP Main Page | United States Military Academy West Point, for more information. If you are driving to the conference, you may park in the Hotel Thayer parking lot or in Buffalo Soldier Field parking lot which is right next to the hotel also. Do not make your own hotel reservations.
How can I get to and from the airport?
West Point is located about an hour and a half from the major airports in NYC (LGA and JFK) and from EWR in Newark, NJ. We are also located about an hour from HPN in White Plains, NY and approximately 30 minutes from SWF in New Windsor, NY. Taxis and Rideshare are available to get you from the airports. There are also various public transportation options available. Please visit our Travel, Accommodations, and Meals page on our webpage, CUWiP Main Page | United States Military Academy West Point, for more information. If you plan to fly, please contact us before making your reservation.

When will I get reimbursed for travel?
If you are being reimbursed by the conference (rather than by your department): after the conference, you can submit the reimbursement form that will be provided to you. Reimbursement will be mailed to you within the month. For more details please contact us at westpoint.cuwip@westpoint.edu.
What if I have dietary restrictions?
We will request dietary restriction information on the registration form. If you believe your dietary needs are unusual, please contact us at westpoint.cuwip@westpoint.edu and we will work to accommodate you.

What should I wear to the conference?
The conference has no dress code, and we encourage students to be comfortable. There will be a plated banquet on Saturday evening at the West Point Club, and many students enjoy dressing up for this event. You may wish to look at photos of previous conferences to see what students typically wear. There is always a chance for winter weather in the area during the month of January, so we also recommend bringing clothes, outerwear, and shoes suitable for those conditions.

Will there be resources available for attendees with disabilities?
We will request information on disability status on the registration form. Please contact us at westpoint.cuwip@westpoint.edu in advance if you have unusual requirements, and we will work to accommodate you.

What are the guidelines for posters and talks?
Please see our Poster Session Instructions on our webpage, CUWiP Main Page | United States Military Academy West Point for more information.

Can I connect with those going to the conference before arriving?
Yes! (Will supply link to social media event page)
What are gender pronouns?
A gender pronoun is the pronoun that a person chooses to use for themselves. For example, if Xena's preferred pronouns are she, her, and hers, you could say "Xena ate her food because she was hungry." She, her, hers and he, him, his are common examples of pronouns. Some people call these "female/feminine" and "male/masculine" pronouns, but many avoid these labels because, for example, not everyone who uses he feels like a "male" or "masculine."

There are also lots of gender-neutral pronouns in use. Here are a few you might hear:

* They, them, theirs (Xena ate their food because they were hungry.) This is a pretty common gender-neutral pronoun.... And yes, it can in fact be used in the singular.
* Ze, hir (Xena ate hir food because ze was hungry.) Ze is pronounced like "zee" can also be spelled zie or xe, and replaces she/he/they. Hir is pronounced like "here" and replaces her/hers/him/his/they/their.
* Just my name please! (Xena ate Xena's food because Xena was hungry) Some people prefer not to use pronouns at all, using their name as a pronoun instead.
* Never, ever refer to a person as “it” or “he-she” (unless they specifically ask you to.) These are often used as offensive slurs.
Why does CUWiP ask for my preferred pronouns? Why should I consider putting them on my name badge?
CUWiP seeks to be a safe space for all participants. By asking for preferred pronouns, we are ensuring that we don’t accidentally misgender any of our participants or make harmful assumptions based on appearance. Even if you have never considered this in relation to yourself, by including your preferred pronouns on your name badge you can help to make other CUWiP participants comfortable. We hope you will consider this.

I have anxiety, depression, etc, and I am worried about attending this conference. What should I do?
Please contact us (westpoint.cuwip@westpoint.edu) if you are comfortable, so we are aware. We will encourage you to try your best during the networking opportunities, but if you need to be paired up with someone you know (either in rooming or meals), please let us know so we can try to accommodate you. We hope that you will be able to comfortably attend the conference and get something from it, but we understand that everyone needs to go at their own pace.

What if I need childcare?
Please contact us to discuss your needs at westpoint.cuwip@westpoint.edu.