



Paper and bioprocess engineering at SUNY-ESF

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— Monica Shaw, Editorial Director



Walters Hall is home of the Paper and Bioprocess Engineering Department.

The Department of Paper and Bioprocess Engineering (PBE) at the State University of New York, College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY-ESF), located in Syracuse, NY, is the oldest department educating engineers and scientists for the pulp, paper, and allied industries in the United States. Established in 1920, the department has grown to be one of the leading educational and research departments in the field.

The PBE Department has nine full-time faculty members with over 130 years of experience at SUNY-ESF, ranging from over 30 years to new faculty members hired within the last five years. The faculty has a wide range of backgrounds, including chemical, paper, agricultural, and mechanical engineering; forestry and forest management; chemistry; and computer science. These diverse backgrounds bring a broad perspective to the educational programs in the PBE Department. In addition, three part-time faculty members also teach at the undergraduate and graduate levels, bringing specialized expertise to the programs.

Education

The PBE Department offers degrees at the Bachelor of Science (B.S.), Master of Professional Studies (M.P.S.), Master of Science (M.S.), and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) levels. At the undergraduate level, the department offers programs in Paper Engineering, Paper Science, and Bioprocess Engineering, the latter being first offered in 2006. The educational offering at the graduate level includes Paper and Bioprocess Engineering (with options in Paper Science and Engineering, Bioprocess Engineering, and Biomaterials Engineering) and, beginning in 2012, Sustainable Engineering Management (with options in Paper Engineering and Bioprocess Engineering).

Most graduates of SUNY-ESF begin careers in the pulp, paper, and allied industries, and many stay in those careers until retirement. Today, PBE grads are

working in virtually every major company in these industries throughout the U.S. It is by their numbers and accomplishments that the success of the Pulp and Paper program can be judged a resounding success. Graduates from the new bioprocess engineering program are also having success in finding employment in these industries, as well as in the broader bioprocess industries.

Many ESF graduates are now industry leaders, both technical and managerial. Others have gone on to establish or lead pulp and paper programs around the country. Irving Isenberg, ESF valedictorian of 1931, taught Fiber Identification at the Institute of Paper Chemistry for many years. R. Chris Peterson, valedictorian of 1960, was the department chair at Miami University in Ohio, and Michael Kocurek (1964) established the Paper Science and Engineering program at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and was chair of the Paper and Wood Science Department at North Carolina State University (NCSU). More recently, Joel J. Pawlak (2001) is currently an associate professor at NCSU.

The Syracuse Pulp and Paper Foundation (SPPF), a not-for-profit organization created in 1960 by pulp and paper industry representatives, provides scholarships for students to study paper engineering at SUNY-ESF. Over the past academic year, SPPF has provided \$110,890 in scholarships to 30 students, funded primarily through the US\$4 million endowment dedicated to this purpose. It is only through the support of the alumni, friends, and corporate sponsors that SPPF will be able to continue its work in providing scholarships for highly qualified students to study paper engineering and pro-