Building on a distinguished history dating back to 1908, Montclair State University is a leading institution of higher education in New Jersey. Designated a Research Doctoral University by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, the University’s nine colleges and schools serve more than 20,000 undergraduate and graduate students with more than 300 doctoral, master's and baccalaureate level programs. Situated on a beautiful, 252-acre suburban campus just 12 miles from New York City, Montclair State delivers the instructional and research resources of a large public university in a supportive, sophisticated and diverse academic environment.

Until recently, MSU was primarily an undergraduate-serving institution, but it is now experiencing considerable growth with a marked increase in research programs and initiatives. In addition to the Research Doctoral University designation—making MSU one of four such public institutions in New Jersey—the University has also been recognized by the New Jersey Office of Higher Education as one of eight doctoral degree-granting institutions in the state. In addition, MSU was designated a public research university in July 2017.

In the fall of 2015, MSU surpassed the 25% Hispanic enrollment threshold required by the U.S. Department of Education to be eligible for funding as a “Hispanic Serving Institution.” This will open up future avenues for research and program funding to support many areas to include (but not limited to) the purchase of laboratory equipment and educational materials for teaching, faculty development and student support services.

According to the 2013 CIRP Freshman Survey, 30% of first-time, full-time freshman report they are the first generation to attend college.

Because of its location in Northern New Jersey, MSU serves a highly diverse student body. In 2016, university-wide, 32% of the students graduating with a bachelor’s degree or certificate in the undergraduate level are underrepresented minority (URM) students. The College of the Arts (CART) undergraduate student body consists of 29% URM and 66% female students.

CART offers more than fifty majors, minors and concentrations in art and design, television and digital media, communication studies, dance, music and theatre. Twice designated as a Center of Excellence, the college maintains a commitment to quality programs, providing professional training and education for students seeking careers as practitioners, educators, public servants and managers of the arts.

The division of Arts and Cultural Programming produces programs that include the presentation of national and international artists plus contemporary works that challenge the boundaries of convention. Events at MSU can be found in as many as six professionally equipped performance facilities, including the state-of-the-art Alexander Kasser Theater—a venue like no other in the region, offering exceptional acoustics and an over-sized proscenium stage in an intimate and comfortable setting. The Theatre and Dance Series and Music Concert Series likewise are vibrant presenters of the arts, as are the University Art Galleries/George Segal Gallery, MFA Gallery and DuMont Television Center: each showcasing works by MSU students, faculty and other artists of distinction.

The School of Communication and Media offers dynamic programs in communication, television and digital media—including production and sound, filmmaking, journalism, public and organizational relations, and health advocacy. The School offers a bachelor of arts and bachelor of fine arts degree encompassing ten majors and concentrations plus a minor at the undergraduate level; and a master of arts at the graduate level. There are 789 undergraduate and 23 graduate students enrolled as of Spring
2017; 60% of undergraduates and 74% of graduates are female, while 23% of undergraduates and 26% of graduates are URM.