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Physics Department Awarded for Improving Undergraduate Physics Education

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BLOOMINGTON, Ill. — The Physics Department at Illinois Wesleyan University has earned an award from the American Physical Society (APS) for its excellence in improving the undergraduate experience for those studying physics.

According to the APS, this Improving Undergraduate Physics Education Award recognizes work of the IWU Physics Department including the "continuing success of recruiting a high number of physics majors, the research opportunities provided by the faculty, the

remarkable commitment to curricular development and strong and sustained efforts to increase diversity of majors."

The APS Award letter adds, "Your department is a role model for other liberal arts colleges."

The APS Committee on Education is dedicated to elevating the quality of physics education at all levels. The group provides support to departmental missions to recruit students from underrepresented groups, [as well as publicizing the importance of physics education to the public.](#)

"We celebrate all of the different ways to do physics: experimental, theoretical and computational," said Narendra Jaggi, professor and chair of the Physics Department. "The bottom line is this: To us, welcoming and honoring all of our physics students is a high priority."

At IWU, the Physics Department provides opportunities such as a concentration in Optics and Photonics as well as offerings in Quantum Information Science Engineering (QISE).

"We as a department work hard to see *all* of our students, regardless of their motivations to study physics, regardless of their previous background in physics," said Jaggi. "[We try to make them feel that they belong in the department.](#)"

The Physics Department also provides a diverse range of clubs for the diverse interests of physics students and has substantially increased the number of offerings for upper level physics courses that have a laboratory component.

Jaggi will accept the award on behalf of the department at the American Physical Society meeting in April in Minneapolis, Minnesota.



Students work with equipment in an experimental physics class at IWU.