

Roger Williams University to Offer Tuition Discount to Police and First Responders

Roger Williams University, a small, private university in Bristol, RI, dedicated to a unique blend of liberal arts and professional education with an emphasis on community engagement and service, announced Monday that it will offer a 15 percent tuition discount to all law enforcement officers and first responders pursuing online and classroom-based graduate education in its School of Justice Studies.

“Roger Williams University’s commitment to discounting graduate tuition for law enforcement officers is an effort to ‘put our money where our values are,’” says Dr. Sean Varano, Associate Professor of Criminal Justice and Director of the M.S. Criminal Justice program at RWU. “We are committed to making graduate education both affordable and uniquely tailored to meet the existing and emerging challenges associated with policing in democratic societies.”

Roger Williams University (RWU) is a private university located only 30 minutes south of Providence, RI, and offers classroom-based and online master’s degrees in its School of Justice Studies in critical areas such as [criminal justice](#), [cybersecurity](#), [leadership](#), and [public administration](#). The University is widely known in New England for serving as the home to the [Justice System Training and Research Institute](#) and official training partner for the New England Association of Chiefs of Police (NEACOP).

Varano believes that the demand for effective first responders has never been greater and those who pursue graduate education help to address important changes in the field. “Hiring and promoting the best candidates into law enforcement is essential to implementing effective policing strategies. Graduate education should be understood as central to this evolution of the mission of the profession,” he says.

To qualify for a tuition discount, prospective students must pursue graduate coursework in the School of Justice Studies, be actively employed as a police officer or sheriff, and maintain satisfactory academic progress during their studies. The discount is also available to those working in corrections assignments.

“I’m proud that the University has chosen to recognize the tireless efforts of the men and women serving our communities and our country,” says Marcus Hanscom, Director of Graduate Admission at RWU. “Through just a small token of our appreciation, we hope that public safety professionals, active duty military, and veterans know that the University has reserved a place for them here.”

Faculty in the RWU School of Justice Studies are subject matter experts in the areas of policing, homeland security, corrections, crime prevention, law and the legal process, the psychology of crime, governance, leadership, and cybersecurity, among others. The faculty is actively engaged with the practitioner community on crime control initiatives both throughout the region and nationally, connecting students to a wide network of professionals in the field and aligning students with current best practices.

“The outstanding faculty [at RWU] challenged me with courses that gave me the background I need to address the evolving issues in the field, and I established a network with my fellow students that I still call upon today,” says Richard N. Ramsay, Chief of Police for the Town of West Greenwich, RI, and a 2004 graduate from the [M.S. Criminal Justice program](#) at RWU. “The decision to earn my graduate

degree at RWU has proven to be one of the most valuable decisions I've made to enhance my career in law enforcement."

According to a 2014 CareerBuilder surveyⁱ, 20 percent of employers are now hiring those with master's degrees to fill vacancies formerly held by those with bachelor's degrees. That trend is now more apparent in law enforcement as the need for educated discourse becomes critical to shaping public policy following events like those at Sandy Hook, Aurora, and more recently in Baltimore.

Graduate programs at RWU focus on both the theoretical and applied knowledge necessary for students to have an edge in the job market. "We really emphasize the importance of effective leadership in the public sector in our programs, particularly as it relates to developing public policy, protecting our citizens, and securing information," says Dr. Stephanie Manzi, Dean of the School of Justice Studies at RWU.

Because of the applied nature of these programs, students can utilize new research and policy knowledge gleaned from their studies right away to real-time applications in their careers. Colonel James Mendonca, Chief of Police for the Central Falls (RI) Police Department and a current student in the M.S. Criminal Justice program, has already put his knowledge from classwork to use. "I truly believe that many of the courses I have taken thus far have expanded my horizons and overall philosophy toward the criminal justice system. The agency is now more proactive and follows a more organized, intelligence-based community policing approach," he says.

And these programs are educating students for jobs that are in high demand. The [M.S. Cybersecurity program](#), for example, is preparing students to be hired as information security analysts, jobs that are expected to experience 37 percent job growth through 2022 with average salaries of \$86,170 as of 2012, according to the Bureau of Labor Statisticsⁱⁱ. The program is popular with veterans and retiring police officers as it offers an opportunity to pair previous experience with cybersecurity coursework for a lucrative second career.

The University's programs in [Leadership](#) and [Public Administration](#) offer law enforcement officials an opportunity to build on their extensive tactical experience with new strategic approaches to policy development and administration.

"I've been in law enforcement since 2002, but I'm learning so much about the administrative side of the field now," says George Labonte, a 2015 graduate of the [Master of Public Administration program](#) who currently serves as a lieutenant for the Wrentham (MA) Police Department and was a recipient of the 2015 American Society for Public Administration Founders' Fellowship.

Labonte credits the flexibility of the program for his success. "The hybrid courses allow you to have face-to-face interaction with your professors and classmates, and the online portion makes it all possible," he says. "With the option of distance learning and all classes being recorded, it allows flexibility when work or family obligations interfere with an in-class meeting."

The master's degree programs in [Criminal Justice](#), [Leadership](#), and [Public Administration](#) are available in classroom, online, and hybrid formats, allowing students the flexibility to continue to fulfill commitments to full-time work and their families while completing their studies. The [Cybersecurity](#) program is offered fully online.

Learn more about graduate programs at Roger Williams University at grad.rwu.edu.

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<http://www.careerbuilder.com/share/aboutus/pressreleasesdetail.aspx?sd=3%2F20%2F2014&id=pr813&ed=12%2F31%2F2014>

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