

The West Chester University Campus Recreation Center

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You walk in the metal double doors, and the smell of rubber hits you. You can hear barbells slamming and basketballs hitting the shiny wooden ground. The front desk employee, who is a fellow student, greets you with a warm smile and asks you to scan your Ram Card on the turnstile. When you pass through, you can see students racing up the rock wall, aiming to reach the top. Once you walk up the grand staircase, you pass basketball courts full of friends shooting hoops. You also see a row of squat racks surrounded by groups of friends chatting about their personal records that day. This floor is covered in workout and cardio machines. Upstairs you can find the weight room and track. Students can be seen squatting, deadlifting, and benching.

The West Chester University Campus Recreation Center provides many options for their students of all shapes, sizes, sexualities, and backgrounds. Many gyms and recreation options are intimidating, as everyone seems more “advanced” or “experienced.” The gym is inclusive of every level of fitness. This campus facility offers many options to ensure that everyone’s fitness and sport-related interests are filled. The hours of operation are from 6 am to 11:30 pm, ensuring that everyone can fit it into their school and work schedules. The weekend hours can be found on the West Chester University Campus Recreation [website](#). Students can use this resource to eliminate stress as the semester comes to a close.

“Everyone is there to improve themselves in some way, so no one is judging at all. People come up to me all the time just to talk, give workout tips, and ask to work out with me. I have only had good experiences,” Eva Crosson said. Crosson, a sophomore studying psychology at West Chester University, frequents the Campus Recreation Center. When asked why she goes to the popular fitness spot on campus, she explained that she loves to go as a stress reliever from school and life. “Obviously I go there to work out, but I also go because it makes me happy. I feel safe and accepted there. It helps relieve my stress from school and it is on campus so I can fit it into my workload,” Crosson said. She explained that a safe environment is created mainly because of the people who can be found there. The employees are always open to talk to if something is wrong and everyone using the facility is a student. The employees also are extremely inclusive and try to get you to join different activities the school is hosting. The fact that everyone around you is also a student and around the same age makes the environment feel a lot more comfortable and safer.

I observed the West Chester University Campus Recreation during one of its busiest time windows, which is between 6 and 7 pm. I saw students from every walk of life. I saw people of all genders, body types, ages, religions, sexualities, races, cultures, social statuses, and personal goals. Some people are dressed in Gymshark matching workout sets and others wear oversized West Chester University apparel. Everyone is friendly and willing to help each other out. Appearances don't matter, as everyone is there to better themselves and holds different levels of fitness.

Inter-mural sports are also provided for students. Some sports offered include basketball, volleyball, soccer, and softball. Students can form teams for a low price and compete in tournaments. Sports lovers can continue playing their favorite sports without needing to commit to one of the school's Division 2 sports programs. Different sports are offered in the fall and spring semesters. Students can log onto [IMLeagues](#) to create teams. This website can also be used to find the group exercise class schedule. Classes they offer include barre, cycling, Zumba, HIIT, BODYPUMP, grit, and yoga. Students can teach or assist in teaching classes. This opportunity allows for student involvement and leadership positions. This also can be encouraging for participation, as students are more likely to take these classes if someone they know is involved.

The lobby of the West Chester University Campus Recreation features a 34-foot rock wall. Beginners to veterans are invited to climb, as many options are available. Instructional programs are offered for beginners, as well as climbing competitions for advanced climbers. The climbing wall is open Monday through Thursday from 3 pm to 9 pm. The Campus Recreation offers a Mile High Challenge in which if students climb a total of 50 times, they can earn a Mile High Challenge t-shirt. More details about the climbing wall, lessons available, and registration for the Annual Golden Rampage Climbing Competition are available on their [website](#).